



UNIVERSITY
OF TASMANIA

**Textual Representations of the
Socio–Urban History of Baghdad:
Critical Approaches to the Historiography of Baghdad
in the 18th and 19th Centuries**

by

Iman Al–Attar, BSc, MArch.
School of Architecture and Design

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the qualification of
Doctor of Philosophy

University of Tasmania
March 2014

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for a degree or diploma by the University or any other institution, except by way of background information and duly acknowledged in the thesis, and to the best of my knowledge and belief no material previously published or written by another person except where due acknowledgement is made in the text of the thesis, nor does the thesis contain any material that infringes copyright. This thesis may be available for loan and limited copying in accordance with the Copyright Act 1968.

Iman Al-Attar
12/03/2014

To my daughters

Contents

List of Illustrations	vi
Acknowledgements	viii
Abstract	ix
Author's Note	x
1. Preliminary Study	1
1.1. Introduction	1
1.2. The Context of Baghdad and Conventional Historiography	5
1.3. Conventional Historiography and Islamic Studies	8
1.4. Historiography and Heritage Perspectives in Baghdad	13
1.5. Historiography and Textual Representation of Architecture	17
1.6. The Imperative for another Method	18
2. Alternative Methods in Historiography: A Methodology	20
2.1. Historiography and the Crisis of Representation	20
2.2. The Major Challenges to the Rewriting of History	24
2.2.1. The Role of History in Representation	24
2.2.2. The Clash Between Modernity and Culture	27
2.2.3. Disputed Concepts in Art and Aesthetics	30
2.3. Present Techniques in Historiography	33
2.4. An Alternative Method	38
3. Critical Study of the Conventional Historiography of Baghdad	44
3.1. Historiography, Urban History and the Foundation of Baghdad	44
3.2. The Account of the Ottoman Empire in Historiography	53
3.3. The Features of Ottoman Cities in Conventional Methods	54
3.4. Narrations of Baghdad in the First Half of the 18th Century	57
3.5. The Urban History of Baghdad between 1750 and 1831	60
3.5.1. Political History of Baghdad between 1750 and 1831	60
3.5.2. Economic and Social History of Baghdad between 1750 and 1831	66
3.5.3. The Cityscape of Baghdad	69
3.5.4. Architectural and Urban Components of the City	75
3.6. Conclusion	80
4. The Role of Literature in Representing the Urban History of Baghdad	83
4.1. Poetry and Literature in Baghdad	84
4.2. The Phenomenon of Urban Literature	88
4.2.1. Urban Literature and the Language of Writing	89
4.2.2. Urban Literature and the Method of Interpretation	91
4.2.3. Thematic Approach to the Interpretation of Literature and Poetry	93

4.3. Textual Representation of Baghdad before the 18th Century	94
4.3.1. Spatial Themes: The Round City of Baghdad	94
4.3.2. Nostalgic Themes: the Second Settlement of Baghdad	96
4.3.3. Spatial Themes: the Second Settlement of Baghdad	99
4.3.4. Reflective Themes: the Second Settlement of Baghdad	102
4.4. Representation Outcomes and Conventional Historiography	107
5. Textual Representation of Overlooked Themes and Spaces in the 18th and 19th centuries	110
5.1. The Conditions of Scholars in Late 18 th and Early 19 th Centuries	111
5.1.1. Sensitivity and Scientific Approaches in Al-Uzari's Poetry	112
5.1.2. Historical Productivity in Al-Suwaidi's Narratives and Poetry	113
5.1.3. Architectural Pleasure in Al-Tamimi's Poetry	115
5.2. The Alternative Method and the Interpretation Techniques	116
5.3. Representing Ignored Nostalgic and Spatial Themes	117
5.3.1. Measures of Beauty of the Whole City of Baghdad	118
5.3.2. The Representation of Karkh	124
5.3.3. Attractive Qualities of the Tigris River	127
5.3.4. The Multiple Meanings of Public Gardens	135
5.3.5. The Numerous Attributes of Learning Centres	139
5.3.6. The Integrative Qualities of Markets	147
5.3.7. The Social and Leisure Significance of Houses	155
5.4. Summary and Discussion	161
6. The Travelogues of Baghdad: Representing Reflective Themes	163
6.1. The Role of the Travelogues in the Representation of History	163
6.2. A History of Travellers and Travel Writing Before the 18 th century	165
6.3. The Travelogues of Baghdad in the 18 th and 19 th Centuries	169
6.3.1. The Mapping Efforts of Carsten Niebuhr	171
6.3.2. The Inclusive Writings of Guillaume Antoine Olivier	175
6.3.3. The Political Focus of Claudius Rich's writings	178
6.3.4. Receptive Descriptions of James Silk Buckingham	183
6.4. The Travelogues and the Suggested Method in Historiography	189
7. Summary of the Research Outcomes: Evaluating the Alternative Method	191
7.1. Conventional Methods and the Research Question	191
7.2. Evaluating the Alternative Method	193
7.3. The Representation of Poetry and Narratives	195
7.4. The Representation of the Travelogues	197
7.5. Summary	198
8. Conclusion	200
9. Bibliography	205

List of Illustrations

Figure 1: The inner gate of the round city of Baghdad reconstructed [Lassner 1970]	6
Figure 2: The round city on the western side of the Tigris and the second settlement on the eastern side. Original map [Warren & Fethi 1982]	8
Figure 3: The unique housing typology of old Baghdad [Warren & Fethi 1982]	14
Figure 4: The life of the river [Fogg 1985]	45
Figure 5: A market-place in Baghdad [Fogg 1985]	46
Figure 6: The plan of the round city of Baghdad [Grabar 1987]	47
Figure 7: Part of the round city reconstructed [Lassner 1970]	48
Figure 8: A flood in fourteenth century Baghdad [Warren & Fethi 1982]	51
Figure 9: The Ottoman Empire and the provinces of Iraq [Inalcik & Quataret 1997]	56
Figure 10: The bridge of Baghdad [Al-Warrak 2007]	70
Figure 11: A map of Iraq by Ibn Hawqal in the tenth century showing the central position of the Tigris River, and outlining the two parts of Baghdad [Jawad & Susa 1958]	71
Figure 12: The wall of Baghdad [Fogg 1985]	72
Figure 13: Al-Bab Al-Wastani [Jawad 1968]	73
Figure 14: Bab Al-Tillism or Talisman Gate [Coke 1927]	73
Figure 15: A detailed decoration with brick on Talisman Gate [Jawad 1968]	74
Figure 16: A quarter in eighteenth century Baghdad [Jawad 1968]	75
Figure 17: Exterior and interior typology of 19th century houses [Warren & Fethi 1982]	76
Figure 18: A typical Baghdadi house of the 19 th century [Warren & Fethi 1982]	76
Figure 19: A bank in Baghdad designed by Chadirji [Aga Khan 1986]	76

Figure 20: A number of mosques and schools on the river's edge; Jami' Al-Asifiyya at the end of the bridge, Al-Madrasa Al-Mustansiriyya on its right and Jami' Al-Wazeer on its left [Makkiyya 2005]	77
Figure 21: The market road, showing Jami' Al-Ahmadiyya at its end [Makkiyya 2005]	78
Figure 22: Mosque of Sheikh Al-Gilani [Coke 1927]	79
Figure 23: Qushla clock tower [http://mawtani.Al-shorfa.com]	80
Figure 24: A sample of script by Abdul-Qadir Al-Baghdadi [Ra'of 2009]	106
Figure 25: A page in a book by Ahmed Al-Ghurabi [Ra'of 2009]	106
Figure 26: Al-Haiderkhana mosque [Coke 1927]	123
Figure 27: A sketch of the western side of Baghdad showing extensive greenery [Jones 1998]	126
Figure 28: A sketch of the eastern side of Baghdad showing less greenery and more architectural components [Jones 1998]	126
Figure 29: The boat bridge of Baghdad [Alexander 1928]	129
Figure 30: The River's atmosphere [Stark 1947]	130
Figure 31: Arabic calligraphy on the main entrance of Jami' Mirjan [Jawad et al 1968]	145
Figure 32: Calligraphy on the walls of Al-Madrasa Al-Mustansiriyya [Jawad et al 1968]	145
Figure 33: Outdoor coffee shop [Stark 1947]	151
Figure 34: Sixteenth century Baghdad by Nasuh Al-Matrakci [Ayduz 2008]	166
Figure 35: Baghdad in mid-nineteenth century by Felix Jones [Jones 1998]	170
Figure 36: Eighteenth century Baghdad by Carsten Niebuhr [Niebuhr 1983]	173
Figure 37: The tomb of Zumurrud Khatun [Coke 1927]	177
Figure 38: Interior court of the British Residency [Jones 1998]	181
Figure 39: Narrow lanes between Baghdad houses [Warren & Fethi 1982]	186

Acknowledgements

This thesis represents long years of devotion to exploring the writing techniques of architectural history. Since the early years of my undergraduate study in architecture I have developed a passion and interest in exploring the 'real story' behind the historical forms. First, I thank Allah for giving me energy and patience to accomplish the study. My thanks go to my principal supervisor, Professor Stephen Loo, who contributed to the development and efficiency of this dissertation with his constant advice, suggestions, and support. Also thanks to my supervisor, Dr. Catriona McLeod, for her continuous feedback and advice throughout my study. Thanks to the staff of the University of Tasmania library for their help in providing books and different resources from all over the world. Also thanks to the Graduate Research Office for granting me a Tasmania scholarship. Particular thanks to the staff and the director of Cradle Coast Campus, Professor Janelle Allison, for providing a comfortable quiet office for me in the PhD students' room. Also thanks to the Research Support Officer, Wendy Roberts for editing the thesis. I would also like to thank Professor Samer Akkach for his advice in the initial stages of my study.

Thank you to all my family and friends in Baghdad for their encouragement and their help in obtaining rare and old books. Special thanks to my sister Firdaws and to my parents who planted the affection for Baghdad and the love of learning in me. I obtained a precious old book from my father's book collection, which was very useful for my research. Also I would like to thank my brother-in-law, Ali Al-Wardi, whose insights and visions inspired me a lot. Special thanks to friends Hassan Al-Sa'ed and Ra'of Al-Attar for their generosity in giving me some rare books as presents. Finally thank you to my small family here in Australia for their patience and support. Particular gratitude goes to my lovely daughters Naba and Noor for offering every possible help and for their tolerance during my extremely busy times. I hope I will have the ability to reward them in the future.

Abstract

This thesis focuses on historiography, which is the study of history and methodology of the discipline of history. The problems of historical theory and the role of critical theory in historical understanding are the main objectives of this study. The thesis explores the urban history of Baghdad in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, to posit alternative historiographical methods that involve non-conventional textual representations as historical evidence. These textual representations include poetry, travelogues and narratives around non-monumental everyday urban places, all of which are often ignored in conventional history writing.

Conventional approaches to historiography are normally single-layered and limited, and contain gaps or 'absences' of distinctive local historical themes and spaces that are smoothed over by grand narratives. The alternative method in historiography suggested in this thesis emphasises the need for closer ties between history and literary criticism. It interprets literature in relation to knowledge, and it discloses their philosophical connections to the 'overlooked' meanings in urban history. Although the alternative method comprises strong links to literary analysis, the thesis seeks a combination of both scientific and speculative philosophies, and an addition of extra concepts, towards the generation of specific historiographical concepts and themes.

Baghdad provides an excellent vehicle to investigate the general problem of historiography, with its complex history of conquest and colonisation, its long history of creative writings and the vague representation of its urban spaces in current historiographical studies. Although this thesis explored the entire history of Baghdad, the period of interest is the Mamluk period between mid-eighteenth and mid-nineteenth centuries. In addition to the transformation and change that shaped Baghdad's urban history, this period significantly produced rich poetry and historical narratives that embraced plentiful themes of the urban development of the city, which have been overlooked in conventional historiography. These themes include the measures of beauty of Baghdad, the attractive and interlocking qualities of the Tigris River, Karkh region and markets, the multiple meanings of gardens and learning centres, and the social and leisure significance of houses.

The thesis focuses on the poetry of the prominent scholar and poet Sheikh Kadhem Al-Uzari, the historian and religious scholar Sheikh Abdul-Rahman Al-Suwaidi, and the poet and chief of the writing bureau in Baghdad Sheikh Saleh Al-Tamimi, in addition to a number of texts by other scholars in that period. The thesis also focuses on the travelogues of mainly four travelers who wrote significant observations of Baghdad during this period, namely; the surveyor Carsten Niebuhr, the entomologist Guillaume Antoine Olivier, the British resident Claudius Rich and the traveler and writer James Silk Buckingham. The thesis also refers to the writings of philosophers such as Edward Said, Hans Georg Gadamer and Michel Foucault for philosophical frameworks to outline the alternative method of interpretation of these texts.

The analysis of poetry and narratives composed by Baghdadis in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and of travelogues of the same period, is 'another' method in historiography that is intended to support and complement the existing understanding of the city's history, and to attain a more dialogical interface with the past. In this way, historiography becomes a more critical influential discipline in historical studies.

Author's Note

All translations from Arabic sources are mine, unless otherwise stated. The translations of poems are intended to convey the meaning of these poems rather than provide a literal translation. Where translations of the same text by others have been consulted or used, appropriate reference is given in the endnotes.

In transliteration, Arabic terms known to English readers are italicised without translation. For technical terms and book titles and, where appropriate, on personal and place names, words are italicised and translated.

All single dates are of the Common Era (CE) or Anno Domini (AD). Double dates are included to show additional *hijri* dates (based on the Islamic Calendar) in the following format: *hijri*/AD.

1 Preliminary Study

1.1 Introduction

“Among the many cities that were part of the urban environment of the medieval Near East, Baghdad perhaps stands out above all others”¹

This research particularly involves issues related to the urban history of Baghdad and the methods and techniques of the historiography of this city. The preliminary goal is to search for another method of writing and representing the social urban history of the city, in order to achieve an integrated interpretation of the city’s urban history. In general, the history of cities usually occupies a great space and attracts more attention from historians than other historical subjects. Since the history of the city is, in essence, the history of humanity, and the city is the hub where all human activity and specific civilizations concentrate, it has gained a greater priority in historical studies. The term ‘historiography’ has been used by Lewis to define the “historical writings written for the express purpose of recording the events of the past for the information and guidance of the present and the future”². This body of techniques, theories, and principles of historical research and presentation has been criticised for its overall reading in search of formal analogies or translations of meaning. Its credibility in transmitting the correct and complete historical image ‘as it has been’, has also been questioned.

Subsequently, historiography is dealing with historical matters which may have been subjected to invention, diversion and corrupt transmission. Those issues are increasingly dominating the field of historical studies, and urge a search for unconventional methods of representing architectural and urban histories. The study of the causes and purposes of historical writings is not new. It goes back to the last three decades of the twentieth century, when historians started to distinguish the problems of conventional methods of historiography. The urban history of the past, with its ambiguities and complexities, has fluctuated and questioned the elements that contribute to its creation. Mark Crinson underlines this point as he notes that “the past is everywhere and it is nowhere”³. Hence, this research is a contribution to the body of research work that started in the last several decades, which focuses on the city and its inhabitants by providing new and meaningful insights, and reflecting the growing sophistication of methodologies and approaches in history and social sciences in general.

¹ Lassner, J 1970, *The topography of Baghdad in the early Middle Ages: text and studies*, Wayne State University Press, Detroit, p.17.

² Lewis, B & Thomas Leiper Kane Collection 1975, *History: remembered, recovered, invented*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, p. 53.

³ Crinson, M (ed.), 2005, *Urban memory: history and amnesia in the modern city*, Routledge, London, New York, p.xi.

Conventional historiographical methods are usually limited to comparative, repetitive and descriptive methodologies. In addition, they have been criticised for their vague and misleading representation of history. Accordingly, historical representation becomes “totally divorced from historical truth”⁴. Conventional historiography lacks a strong focus on the social system, which represents “a universal problem that preoccupies thought today and touches its core reality”⁵. It also lacks an integrated concept of urban history, as it examines single intangible spatial ideas like geometry, scale, and harmony. It analyses other composite ideas that combine simple conceptions, like orientation, accessibility and connectivity. The traditional methodology of representing urban history utilises urban morphology and typology as the main sources for this interpretation. While urban morphology studies are important in any attempt to interpret past urban history, they are inadequate in providing a comprehensive interpretation. Other dimensions, such as social and cultural aspects, and the concealed and unperceived qualities of the city should also contribute to the reinterpretation process.

The historiography of Baghdad indicates unbalanced emphasis on the different phases of the city’s architectural and urban history. For example, while historical materials provide comprehensive studies of the Abbasid period⁶, describing it as the city of fabulous imagery and exotic splendours⁷, there is an obvious shortage, and sometimes complete absence, of studies that document the wealth of Baghdad’s urban history before and after the Abbasid period. This remarkable fact raises many questions about the legibility and credibility of the writing process and the sources that provide information for the historical material. This study addresses some insistent questions about the enigmatic historicity of Baghdad. The urban history of Baghdad provides a remarkable case that motivates the investigation of the relationship between literary and material culture. Its unique geographic location allowed it to be a major trade centre and an internal port for centuries. In addition, it was the administrative focus of empires for centuries, and a great centre of theological studies, as well as general learning. The city has been the home for many famous scholars who produced significant intellectual works and contributed to the making of culture and history.

The prevailing concern of Baghdad’s historiography has been about the mass of traditional buildings. The classical reading of the urban forms of Baghdad that was inherited from the nineteenth century represents the historical city as an organic city that signifies the ‘architecture of need’⁸. The urban fabric analysed by those studies is the typical traditional fabric of many cities in the area. In addition to linear markets and mosques, it contains compact clusters of non-geometrical attached houses centred on courtyards. The houses are often built to similar heights and the dominant features of the skyline are domes and minarets. Yet the image drawn by sources of the eighteenth century is completely opposite. The cityscape of Baghdad is illustrated as a gloomy one, consisting of demolished mosques and narrow walkways that have old and demolished houses on their sides. On the contrary, images drawn from texts express a lovable and pleasing city blessed with a great river and

⁴ Arkoun M & Aga Khan Award for Architecture 1986, *Architecture education in the Islamic world : proceedings of seminar ten in the series Architectural transformations in the Islamic world*, Granada, Spain, Concept Media Ltd, Singapore, p.22.

⁵ Al-Sadr, MB 2006, *Our philosophy*, Ansarriyan Publications, Qum, p.22.

⁶ The Abbasids rule in Baghdad between (762-1258).

⁷ Warren, J & Fethi, I 1982, *Traditional houses in Baghdad*, Coach Publishing House, Horsham, England, p. 17.

⁸ Bacon, EN 1967, *Design of cities*, Thames and Hudson, London.

abundant greenery in addition to sociable people. In his article about Baghdad, Michael Cooperson links those gloomy images to political reasons⁹.

In order to highlight the historiography problem of Baghdad, this study revisits critical moments in the history of Baghdad. The focus of this research is on a significant period of Baghdad's history, specifically between the years 1747 and 1831. The study of the social urban history of Baghdad in the late eighteenth century is significant. The eighteenth century is considered as an 'abstract and brief chronicle of the past'¹⁰, because of its ambiguity, complexity and transitional criteria. The historiography of this period focuses mainly on political and economical issues, with less focus on the social urban history of the city. Although some historians point out that this period falls under Ottoman rule, others mark the year 1747 as the beginning of the anonymous rule of the Mamluks in Iraq¹¹. The Mamluks were among a number of power groups who challenged the Ottoman Empire's authority during the eighteenth century, as political and economical troubles culminated and the base of defence in the provinces had widened and generated an opportunity for paid troops and local families to take over parts of the empire.

Nevertheless, the significance of this period is not related entirely to the Mamluks' rule. This period is important because it marks the end of the intermediate history of Baghdad that lasted for eight centuries, and the beginning of the new history of the city. It also represents a distinctive stage in architectural and urban development of the city, with social and political transformations. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Baghdad witnessed increasing urban developments. The urban development of Baghdad was influenced by a number of social, geographical, environmental and political elements, such as the increased tendency to construct more roads and markets, the motivation to build and renovate mosques and schools, the settlements along the Tigris River, virulent epidemics and harsh climate changes, and the complex political situation.

In terms of literature and art, this period witnessed more active attempts in writing and composing. Scholars and knowledgeable people became the most effective group in society; they helped to settle the society after each war or fatal epidemic. Those scholars were usually part of big families, which were well-known for their knowledge and effective influence on the society. Unfortunately, due to the unsettled situation, some of them moved to other cities in the area, with many of them composing brilliant writings about longing for their beloved city, Baghdad. However, despite the difficult circumstances, a fair number of scholars continued to live in Baghdad. The important prose works of this period provide crucial information that promotes the understanding of the mysterious history of the city, and the confused interpretation of architectural and urban forms.

This research utilises poetry and historical narratives in order to promote a different frame of reference that establishes specific connections between material culture, narratives and

⁹ Cooperson, M 1996, 'Baghdad in rhetoric and narrative', *Muqarnas : an annual on the visual culture of the Islamic world*, Vol 13, Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture, pp. 99-113.

¹⁰ Said, EW 2007, *On late style: music and literature against the grain*, 1st Vintage Books edn, Vintage Books, New York, p.35.

¹¹ See Rafeq, A 2005, 'A different balance of power: Europe and the Middle East in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries', in Choueiri, Y M (ed.), *A companion to the history of the Middle East*, Blackwell Pub. Ltd, Malden, MA. Also see Jawad, M, Susa, A, Makkiyya, M & Ma'ruf, N 1968, *Baghdad*, Iraqi Engineers Association with Gubenkian Foundation, Baghdad.

literature. This frame shifts the focus away from the physical qualities and liberates urban history from the burden of causal interpretation. It also breaks disciplinary boundaries and reveals the unknown and undiscovered criteria of place that are not cited in conventional sources. The study also emphasises the role of inherited literature and narratives in the representation of the urban history of Baghdad, by investigating the benefits of 'urban literature' suggested by Michael Cooperson. The thesis verifies urban literature among important sources of knowledge that can enrich studies of urban history.

The integrated method utilises two approaches; first, it employs elements other than physical appearance in the interpretation process, including historical, social, cultural, economic, and environmental elements. The second approach is to study architectural and urban forms in relation to surrounding urban forms and significant urban experiences. In other words, an integrated interpretation of urban history focuses on the study of the city as a whole, and ensures the connectivity between all the elements that contribute to the creation of the city and the production of the urban experience, in order to represent meaning in their relationship to one another.

The basic method for this study is to examine the representation of Baghdad's urban history mainly through the interrogation of the intellectual work of three local scholars of that time: Kadhém Al-Uzari, Abdul-Rahman Al-Suwaidi and Saleh Al-Tamimi. Yet, the literary examination in this study is not confined to these scholars; other intellectual works are also included where there is any insufficiency in the limited texts of these scholars, or to elaborate on some urban spaces in the city. In addition to the limited existing scholarly work of this period, the travelogues that document Baghdad's history during this period are also few compared with other adjacent cities such as Damascus, Aleppo, and Cairo. This is because European travellers in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries did not stay for long in Baghdad, due to constant troubles. In addition, their interest in Baghdad and its resources increased in late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Nevertheless, I believe that the analysis of the available works by local scholars, in addition to the observations of travellers, is a fruitful unconventional technique in historiography that can enrich this investigation, by constructing a comprehensive history based on contradictory remarks from inside and from outside.

Another problem that faces the researcher of eighteenth and nineteenth century Baghdad is the lack of original resources that illustrate its architectural and urban history. The reasons for this difficulty are the shortage of presses at that time, the unsettled situation and continuous immigration, the damage of books due to constant floods, and the lack of awareness by people of the importance of documentation. Nevertheless, a good number of old historical and literary materials were kept in individual private collections, which has maintained the availability of some references. Also, the efforts of some Iraqi scholars during the second half of the twentieth century (who realised the need for more investigation of Baghdad's history) contributed to the enrichment of this research. Some scholars, like Ahmed Susa and Mustafa Jawad, used travelogues as the main resource material, while others, like Imad Abdussalam Ra'of, Mahmud Shukri Al-Alusi, and Ihsan Fethi, referred to official documentations, old Baghdadi books and their own observations.

Nonetheless, the contradictory and mixed views are the main problems of historiography of this period, which brings confusion to the research. However, this is a common issue in historical studies, and it could be a positive aspect that enriches the search through careful and comparative analytical study that eliminates these contradictions. It is important to assert

here that the aim of this study is neither to undertake a thorough critique of architectural historiography of Baghdad nor to extend its historical breadth by introducing new and unexplored topics. It is rather an attempt to combine conventional means with other unconventional notions that are embedded in texts, particularly travelogues and poetry, and present them in a simple conceptual unit. It is also an investigation of possible methodologies for understanding and representing urban history, and a search for potential critical openings for present practices of rewriting architectural and urban history. Before investigating potential methodologies for this study, it is important to address the issues of conventional historiography in relation to textual representation of architecture and culture, which has a powerful influence on aspirations and participations. In addition, the study of the connection of conventional historiography to Islamic studies, history, and heritage in Baghdad is equally important to capture the present situation and the current attitudes in historiography, making the search for an alternative method an essential task.

1.2 The Context of Baghdad and Conventional Historiography

“Baghdad has never given its secrets lightly. Even among Muslim cities it has been reticent, its architectural splendours hidden behind high walls and within deep courtyards”¹²

Baghdad is an ancient city with a rich urban history. It is located in a strategic place that increased its significance as the commercial, social, and political hub of many important cities in the region. Baghdad was mentioned in documents of King Hammurabi in 1750 B.C.¹³, which indicates the ancient history of this city. Although most of the existing urban forms were inherited from the period following Islam, the cityscape of Baghdad and the traces of architectural and urban forms reflect the diversity and variety that resulted from its long urban history. The available historical studies on Baghdad, specifically, are few compared with studies on other cities in the region, such as Cairo, Damascus, and Istanbul. These limited studies agree on the enigmatic and unexplained aspect of the city’s history, and indicate large gaps in the conventional historiography of Baghdad that do not provide a complete and clear historicity. These gaps are recognised in the early eighteenth century and the four preceding centuries.

Historians have been exploring the reasons for this mysterious history, and the elements contributing to its contradictory character of brilliance and gloominess in history. In a study that examines the foundation of Baghdad among three examples of symbolic appropriation of the land, Grabar shows an ‘unknown component’ of the city’s history in relation to the round city of Baghdad. He argues that many events contributed to the foundation of Baghdad, including political, economic, strategic, administrative, and climatic influences, which are acceptable singly and collectively. However, all these factors could apply to several other early settlements in Iraq, which raises questions about the specific features of Baghdad that made it different. He notes “it is therefore legitimate enough to suppose that something else was involved here”¹⁴. Grabar refers to the original goals of establishing this round city, and he describes the perfectly astonishing urban composition of Baghdad as a palatial one and not really an urban one, “to which none of the early Islamic cities corresponds”¹⁵.

¹² Warren & Fethi, *Traditional houses in Baghdad*, p.18.

¹³ Al-Warid, BA 1980, *Hawadeth Baghdad fi 12 qarn*, Al-Dar Al-Arabiyya, Baghdad.

¹⁴ Grabar, O 1987, *The formation of Islamic art*, Yale University Press, New Haven, p. 68.

¹⁵ Grabar, *The formation of Islamic art*, p. 70.

The excitement and admiration for the round city, expressed by historians, was initiated by the Orientalists who have thoroughly articulated the astonishing features of this city that represents 'the glories of medieval Islam'¹⁶. The round city was carefully planned and heavily decorated and maintained in order to provide a high level of security and protection to the caliph, by constructing numerous walls and gates (Figure 1). However, the life span of the city was short as it was abandoned in less than seven decades. The city started to decay gradually until it vanished completely without leaving any trace. Yet the memory of its original shape and the ideas behind it lasted for centuries in a way that has no parallel in the history of other cities in the region. It is correct that the round city was the first planned city in the history of Baghdad, and it has been unceasingly admired by the city dwellers and historians equally. Yet an examination of the city's foundation articulates that the history of dwellings in the Baghdad area goes a long way before this period¹⁷, showing that relating the beginning of the history of Baghdad to the round city foundation, and the exaggeration of its status, are one of the major tricks in Baghdad's historiography.

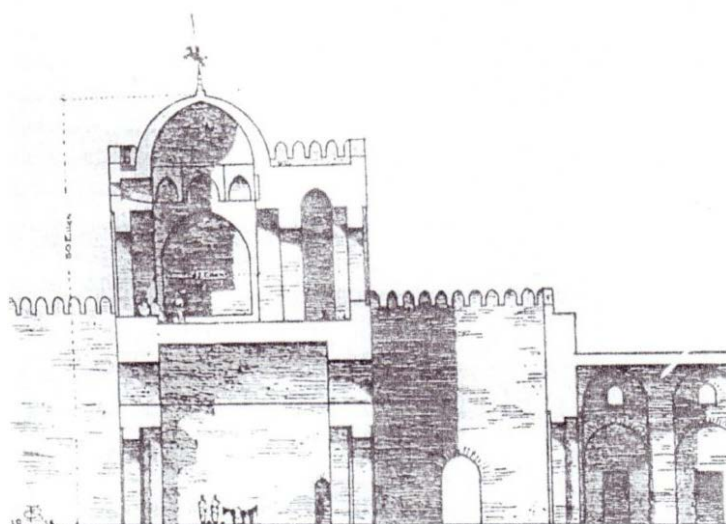


Figure 1: The inner gate of the round city of Baghdad reconstructed [Lassner 1970]

Apart from the round city myth, Andre Raymond proposes another cause of the vagueness of the urban history of Baghdad in the eighteenth century and the preceding period. He notes that an investigation into the historical sociology of Baghdad shows that the reason behind the lack of documentation and basic study of the city's understanding is the pre-eminence of French scholarship at that time, which lacked interest in 'British-controlled Iraq'¹⁸. The observer of European travellers who visited Baghdad in this period recognises that they were mostly German and French, while the travellers of the nineteenth century who visited Baghdad were mostly British and American¹⁹. The gradual change of French interest in

¹⁶ Lewis, B 1975, *History: remembered, recovered, invented*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey. p. 97.

¹⁷ For more details see Chapter Two of this thesis, p. 49.

¹⁸ Raymond, R 2005, 'Urban life and Middle Eastern cities: the traditional Arab city', in Choueiri, YM, *A companion to the history of the Middle East*, Blackwell companions to world history, Blackwell Pub. Ltd, Malden, MA, p. 207.

¹⁹ Examples of the travellers of the eighteenth century are Carsten Niebuhr, Olivier, and Mirza Abu Taleb Khan, and examples of the travellers of the nineteenth century are Buckingham and Fogg.

Baghdad in the eighteenth century may explain the lack of literature written by international travellers. The transcripts of local scholars and neighbouring travellers who wrote their observations about the city and documented some events may compensate for the shortage of documentation, yet these works were produced as literature and poetry rather than maps and images.

On the other hand, Michael Bonine suggests that despite the continuous damage to original documents, the available documents provide adequate information about the city's history. He implies that the lack of awareness of the eighteenth century's texts of Baghdad is a result of political attention which may have curtailed the research and make it difficult to progress further²⁰. These different opinions even on the availability or lack of historical materials reflect the great impact of self-insights on the writing of history. In fact, the case of Baghdad is complex if it was envisioned from political perspectives; yet, what makes Baghdad distinctive among other cities in the region is its unique location that allowed a significant mixture of different cultures. Also the perseverance of the city and its ability to survive fatal attacks throughout history established this sense of distinctiveness.

In addition, the religious and organisational background of the city, as a hub of knowledge and learning for centuries, apart from political situations, created a great attachment to the city. This passion has always been reflected in Baghdadis' literature and poems to a great extent. This city has been a major source of inspiration for poets throughout its history to a degree that almost all scholars, especially poets, mentioned the city and the Tigris River, which passes through the city, in their works. A good example of recent poetic work is a poem by Sheikh Ahmed Al-Wa'eli. The poet describes the eternal beauty of the city, and associates the flow of the Tigris River with scholarly motivation.

Oh Baghdad, your face will remain glorious and attractive
 No matter if the atmosphere was terrible or superior
 Every time I examine your originality closely
 My admiration for you increases a lot
 Different races added different bloods to your character
 Yet they didn't change your distinguished origins
 Many intellectual tributaries flowed in your river
 They seduce the minds and astonish the brains²¹

It is important to highlight the fact that the name 'Baghdad' took multiple identities in historic writing, which brings more vagueness to historiography. The reader of different historical materials on Baghdad discovers the mix and confusion; while some writings mention the Round City as Baghdad, other writings point to the second settlement of Baghdad, or the old settlement or even the whole area of Baghdad, which combines all settlements. Although the different settlements of Baghdad took different names in history, the name 'Baghdad' survived and remained as a representative of the identity of the place.

²⁰ Bonine, M E 2005, 'Islamic Urbanism, Urbanites, and the Middle Eastern City', in Choueiri, YM, *a companion to the history of the Middle East*, Blackwell companions to world history, Blackwell Pub. Ltd, Malden, MA, p.403.

²¹ Al-Wa'eli, A 1980, *Dewan Al-Wa'eli* (Arabic), First edition, Ahlul-Bayt Press, Beirut, viewed 20 July 2011, <<http://www.Al-wa'eli.com>>, p.68, the Arabic script is also added here.

سيظل وجهك رائعا جذابا	بغداد ساء بك الهوى أم طابا
أمعنت فيها زدتني أعجبا	بغداد أي أصالة بك كلما
لكنها ما غيرت أحسابا	صبت بك الأعراق مختلف الدما
تغوي النهى وتحير الألبابا	وجرت بنهرك للعقول روافد

However, the difficulty in distinguishing which Baghdad is shown in specific writings creates a problem for Baghdad's historiography.

In the literature and travel writings of the late eighteenth century, two diverse Baghdads were the centre of attention and admiration (Figure 2). While the compassion of the local poets of the eighteenth century was to the Ottoman Baghdad with an appreciation of the imaginative circular city, the travellers admired the circular city and undervalued the city of the eighteenth century because of negative visual appeal. For Baghdadis, the continuous remembrance of this city is a stimulus to build a better city, since it keeps reminding them of a great history. Yet for some historians, the magnificent attributes of the city and the strong aesthetic and geometric criteria meet their anticipations about Islamic architecture as an 'expression of power'²², and as a utopian experiment in a scientific order²³. In fact, placing Baghdad as a model of Islamic cities²⁴ led to extensive international studies to discover more about it as an example of beautiful medieval cities as works of art.



Figure 2: The round city on the western side of the Tigris and the second settlement on the eastern side. Original map [Warren & Fethi 1982]

1.3 Conventional Historiography and Islamic Studies

The investigation of the methods and schemes of conventional historiography in relation to what is called Islamic architecture is crucial to this search, as Baghdad is one of the important large cities in the Islamic world. Current conventional methods present three approaches; material documentation, spatial analysis, segregation and isolation. For instance, architects and art historians who specialise in Islamic studies, such as Stefano Bianca and Oleg Grabar, are emphasising the role of documenting architectural forms as identity providers and as a tool for historical lucidity. They assert that substantial historical figures encompass unique

²² See Grabar, *The formation of Islamic art*. Also see Mitchell, T 1988, *Colonising Egypt*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, New York.

²³ Moholy-Nagy, S 1968, *Matrix of man: an illustrated history of urban environment*, Pall Mall Press, London, p. 60.

²⁴ Moholy-Nagy, S 1968, *Matrix of man*, p. 81. Also see Oleg Grabar's remarks about the plan of Baghdad in the Aga Khan Award for Architecture, 'Architecture education in the Islamic world', *Proceedings of seminar ten in the series Architectural transformations in the Islamic world*, p.35.

meaning within their formal components; hence they should be carefully preserved. Those scholars oppose the idea of privileging textual representation over physical documentation.

Likewise, Robert Ousterhout states that there is a remarkable change in focus from buildings to ideas in the study of architectural history. He suggests that the reason for this alteration of attitudes from physical forms to ideas is because current historians are “too bored with the actual bricks and mortar to read a technical report or a primary source, instead they focus their discourses on the history of scholarship and on the apocrypha of history”²⁵. Ousterhout argues that sometimes bricks and mortar are not ideological signifiers, though “they can inform us about cultural transformations in a somewhat different way”²⁶. He recommends that more fieldwork is necessary to document the vanishing heritage in the eastern Mediterranean, and “this, not interpretation, must be the first task of the architectural historian”²⁷.

There is no doubt that the accumulated wealth of documentation of architectural forms enriches the appreciation of the architectural experience and provides symbolic analyses of tangible characteristics. Yet, it cannot put forward a deeper interpretive language, since “it’s never enough for the good building process to focus on the outside frame and to choose this frame in an abstract way separated from reality”²⁸. Perhaps the solution to this problem would be not to privilege documentation over the representation of ideas, but to consider it as a parallel source of information and aids for more understanding of the urban experience.

The second method in conventional historiography regarding the interpretation of Islamic architecture is the focus on spatial understanding rather than the analysis of the mass of buildings. Scholars such as Edmund Bacon, Sibel Moholy-Nagy, Christine Boyer and others have strongly supported this method in their writings. In addition to spatial analysis, Bacon suggests studying the nature of society, certain circumstances and the diversity of decisions made by people who live in it. He states that a “deeper understanding of the interactions of these decisions can give us the insight necessary to create noble cities in our own day”²⁹. The idea of reading architecture as a space rather than reading it as a mass is among the vital approaches for understanding historical experience. However, historians have been searching for more references that establish specific connections between the objects and their rationale for creation and continuity, which are not provided by the spatial inquiry.

In the last few decades, scholars like Hans-Georg Gadamer and Hayden White have suggested the consideration of discursive subjects like literature, history, sociology, and psychology as the main sources for a more inclusive interpretation of architecture and urban history. Edward Said relates these subjects to spatial analysis. He calls them ‘systems of rarefaction’ that comprise their symbolic, signifying, international, and formal differences from other groups³⁰. By utilising these subjects, the representation of the text acts as the means by which spatial concepts are reduced to tangible images, so the strength and

²⁵ Ousterhout, R 1995, ‘Ethnic identity and cultural appropriation in early Ottoman architecture’, in Necipoglu Gl & Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture (eds.), *Muqarnas : an annual on Islamic art and architecture*, vol. 12, E.J. Brill, Leiden, the Netherlands, pp. 48-62.

²⁶ Ousterhout, ‘Ethnic identity and cultural appropriation in early Ottoman architecture’, pp. 48-62.

²⁷ Ousterhout, ‘Ethnic identity and cultural appropriation in early Ottoman architecture’, pp. 48-62.

²⁸ Al-Sadr, MB 2003, *Al-Islam yaqud Al-Hayat, Al-Madrassa Al-Islamiyya, risalatuna* (Arabic), Centre of Special Studies of Imam Alsadr writings, Shariat, Qum, p. 180.

²⁹ Bacon, EN 1967, *Design of Cities*, Thames and Hudson, London, p. 13.

³⁰ Said, EW 1985, *Beginnings: intention and method*, Columbia University Press, New York, p. 300.

magnitude of textual representation is embodied in this two-way interaction between material criteria and initial ideas of the urban experience.

The new process that implements openness to other subjects and embraces flexibility and multiple ways of relating, contributes to more productivity and sensibility in dealing with sensitive subjects like history and culture. This process also provides a way into the realm of interpretations and presents a method which allows the coexistence of various meanings. The significance of 'other' aspects of built form has been the focus of architectural historians since the 1970s. The incorporation of all architectural criteria such as mass, space, art, history, and science, would develop a complete vision of architecture instead of the unbalanced single-focus visions.

However, studies that initiate textual representation consider the narratives that are inherited from the Ottomans as difficult to understand because they are "from a world that is remote both in time and culture"³¹. The sudden and immense change of attitudes between the twentieth century and the nineteenth and eighteenth centuries established a sense of remoteness and isolation from the period prior to the twentieth century. The slight unfamiliarity with those texts is a result of the large gaps generated by modern historiography and the emotional effects of modernity, which shaded the history of the Ottoman era in oldness and antiquity, despite the fact that this period is not that distant in reality. I think that this psychological remoteness influenced the techniques of conventional historiography, and created barriers to the interpretation process.

Historians consider understanding texts of the past is difficult for the contemporary mind because of the "temporal distance between the buildings and the texts"³². However, the increase of recent studies about Ottoman architecture reflects the growing interest of historians in connecting to that world in order to reach more understanding of both historical and present circumstances. In fact, the real challenge, I believe, is not in reading and understanding those texts, but in drawing out realistic experience from among mixed and contradictory events. In any case, the fundamental insights of those narratives add to the definition and limits of space and confront the psychological issues of remoteness and isolation.

In order to comprehend the motives of conventional methods in Islamic cities, it is necessary to elaborate on the initial basis of the idea of the Islamic city and Islamic architecture, as these ideas affected the historiography of the region of Baghdad to a great extent. According to Andre Raymond, the principal creators of the concept of the 'Islamic city' and its body of research are a number of French Orientalist scholars from the 1920s. Those scholars proposed that as a doctrine, judicial system, and more generally as a culture, Islam determines a specific city model which they call 'Muslim town'³³. Raymond notes that the reason behind the negative judgements these texts deliver on traditional towns is because "these texts clearly display the influence of a colonial spirit"³⁴. He considers Gustave von

³¹ Morkoc, SB 2010, *A study of Ottoman narratives on architecture: text, context and hermeneutics*, Academica Press, Bethesda, p. 144.

³² Morkoc, *A study of Ottoman narratives on architecture*, p.18.

³³ Veinstein, G 2008, 'The Ottoman town; fifteenth-eighteenth centuries', in Jayyusi, SK, Holod, R, Petruccioli, A & Raymond, A (eds.), *The city in the Islamic world*, Brill, Leiden, Boston, pp.207-212.

³⁴ Raymond, R 2005, 'Urban life and Middle Eastern cities: the traditional Arab city', in Choueiri, YM, *A companion to the history of the Middle East*, Blackwell companions to world history, Blackwell Pub. Ltd, Malden, MA, p. 207-208.

Grunebaum's article 'The Structure of the Muslim Town'³⁵, as the account of the final formulation of the notion of the Islamic city and an effective text that sums up this doctrine³⁶.

These remarks explain the direct relation between the Islamic city doctrine and the Orientalist perspectives. The superficial understanding of Islam in the Orientalists' minds, and their preoccupied judgements influenced the methodology of writing about those cities greatly. As well, the use of specific linguistic terms affects the way of thinking about and the way of understanding history. The association of a city with a religion resulted in continued major critiques of the Islamic city in literature. Studies of what are called 'Muslim towns' or 'Arabic towns' developed contradictory senses of admiration, degradation, remoteness, and unfamiliarity. The association of these towns with a definitive religion, nationality and geography restricted the historical experience and generated a feeling of a unique, yet ambivalent, history.

Although the doctrine of the Islamic city invoked a great amount of research, and enriched the study of Islamic architecture, it added much confusion to the historical research on Islamic cities. The interest in Islamic studies through this doctrine came to a height in the 1970s. This culmination resulted in the founding of many specialised organisations, and the gaining of acceptance globally. The aim of establishing those organisations was to promote the study of Islamic art, architecture, urbanism, landscape design, and conservation, and to apply that knowledge to contemporary design projects. It is important to note that these organisations were not necessarily influenced directly by the doctrine of the Islamic city, but they were influenced intellectually by these concepts.

The most significant example of these organisations is The Aga Khan Development Network, which established the Aga Khan programme for Islamic Architecture in 1979 at Harvard University, and at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology; in 1983 the journal *Muqarnas* was founded. This organisation also established the Aga Khan Award for Architecture in 1977 and the Aga Khan Trust for Culture in 1988. Another example of these organisations is the Centre for Middle Eastern Studies that was established in the 1970s in Rutgers University, and a third example is the *Journal of the Islamic Environmental Design Research Centre* founded in 1985 by the Italian architect Attilio Petruccioli.

Those organisations continued to adhere to the idea of the Islamic city model and Islamic urbanism. The basic concept launched and enhanced by those institutions is that there 'was' an Islamic city that constituted 'Islamic architecture' and that this architecture has special qualities that should be studied in depth. Consequently, some terms, such as culture, heritage, identity of place, traditional, Arabic cities and Middle Eastern, became key assets for the preservation process and the main focus of those studies. This movement received international acceptance of the idea of studying architecture in relation to 'other' place and 'other' history. In Islamic cities, architectural education programmes were also emphasising the ideas of Islamic heritage and the Islamic city, and scholars and architects of that period were keen to promote this proposal.

As a result, extensive studies were initiated about the principles and guidelines for the Islamic built environment, the institutions of Muslim society, the traditional Muslim philosophy of life, the role of Islamic laws, and the innovative ideas of morphological structuring principles.

³⁵ This article was published in 1955. See Wilson, D (ed.) 1976, *Islam and medieval Hellenism: social and cultural perspectives*, Variorum reprints, London.

³⁶ Raymond, R 2005, 'Urban life and Middle Eastern cities: the traditional Arab city', p. 207.

The book of Besim Hakim in 1986 and the thesis of Jamal Akbar in 1984 are some examples of this approach³⁷. In addition, this approach to heritage maintenance focused on Islamic art, calligraphy, water systems, and gardens more than conceptual frameworks and experience. However, Bonine suggests that in the late 1980s another idea was initiated with this approach; that is “to explore the inner motivations behind visual structures as the main source of pre formal shaping forces”³⁸, in order to examine the impact of Islam on built forms. Thus, an additional field of studies that considers social urban history has emerged later, which reflects the mounting interest in the social sciences for understanding societies and individuals.

According to this doctrine, the unique heritage of Islamic cities has been called ‘Islamic architecture’. In many cases, the association of architecture with Islam as a religion requires evidence. In the process of analysing an Islamic settlement, the study of the urban history of the place would provide clues on the articulation of the space, and this involves the study of architectural, cultural, and political history in addition to the aesthetic aspects. There is no doubt that the similarities between architectural components of different cities in the Islamic world reflect some ideological and performance similarities. It can be assumed that Islamic principles affected the articulation of Islamic settlements and the construction of urban forms. Although Islam made people aware of nature and its laws, and enriched human culture, thought and philosophy, it is agreed that Islamic rules do not contradict scientific development. Therefore, Islam may express the theory of architecture rather than architectural science. Accordingly, the identity of urban heritage in Islamic cities relates to a number of other factors in addition to religion, and therefore, connecting architectural heritage with Islam may be problematic.

Nevertheless, it is beyond question that the notion of ‘Islamic architecture’ is not a rational or ideological system, but it is rather a political and educational one. Edward Said claims that Islam has remarkable implications for Orientalism, in general, whose purpose was not so much to represent Islam in itself as to represent it for the medieval Christian³⁹. He calls this concept that has powered freedom and knowledge ‘twentieth century Orientalism’⁴⁰. He also notes that if this knowledge has any meaning, then it will be “a reminder of the seductive degradation of knowledge, of any knowledge, anywhere, at any time”⁴¹. It appears that the notion of Islamic city studies is a culmination of colonialist and secularist complications in the eighteenth and nineteenth century. The secular approach has changed architectural and urbanism thinking in Europe and consequently influenced colonised areas. According to Ansari, the basic thoughts of the secular movement are that religious authority will not be allowed to interfere in the secular sphere of life, and that time is tangible and the march of history implies an irreversible process⁴². This meant that religion will have a marginal place in the life of the community, and that relating to it is a sign of backwardness.

³⁷ Akbar, JA 1984, ‘*Responsibility in the Traditional Muslim Built Environment*’, PhD thesis, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

³⁸ Bonine, ME 2005, ‘Islamic urbanism, urbanites, and the Middle Eastern city’, in Choueiri, YM, *A companion to the history of the Middle East*, Blackwell companions to world history, Blackwell Pub. Ltd, Malden, MA, p.394.

³⁹ Said, EW 1979, *Orientalism*, 25th anniversary edn, Vintage Books, New York, p. 60.

⁴⁰ Said, *Orientalism*, p. 197.

⁴¹ Said, *Orientalism*, p. 328.

⁴² Ansari, MT 2001, *Secularism, Islam, modernity: selected essays of Alam Khundmiri*, SAGE, London, p.231.

The idea of secularism informed many architectural operations in Baghdad and the region, yet some scholars consider it a “natural development of the twentieth century”⁴³. On the whole, Raymond points out that the doctrine of the Islamic city was formulated to imply that the Islamic city is a non-city and Muslim urbanism is a non-urbanism, because it refers to the Muslim town as nothing but the ruined image of a fine ancient order. In this regard, he states that recent research on those cities shows that the supposed under-administration and non-administration of urban areas in the Ottoman period has been greatly exaggerated⁴⁴. In the next section I show the implications of conventional historiographical techniques on current conservation practice in Baghdad, to identify the gaps and the need for another method.

1.4 Historiography and Heritage Perspectives in Baghdad

“The understanding of the city in Islamic times has benefited considerably from the field of Islamic art and architecture, a field that encompasses historical and archaeological perspectives as well.”⁴⁵

This section examines the effects of the three methods of conventional historiography explained in the previous section; substantial documentation, spatial analysis and isolation. I will discuss these effects on the architectural heritage of Baghdad in the area that was inhabited in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and became central business district of Baghdad in the twentieth century. The unique architectural and urban forms inherited from this period are highly appreciated and considered important parts of local Baghdadi heritage. The special techniques utilised to fulfil social requirements and the brilliant solutions for inconsistent weather conditions made this building typology one of the most successful experiences in Baghdad’s urban history. This architecture has continued to inspire architects and builders until today (Figure 3).

Although the historical documentation of the old houses that survived through the nineteenth century points out that the unique style of those houses was inherited from the eighteenth century, those resources remain focused on the great appeal of the nineteenth century houses with their extensive ornamentation and decoration⁴⁶. This area contains a wealth of information and historical accounts that are yet to be discovered. However, the solid image of the historical city became abstract with time, when it experienced loss of meaning and destruction due to the lack of deep interpretation and the impact of the advancement of modernity. The extensive conservation and rehabilitation efforts in the last several decades succeeded in maintaining individual historical buildings, yet little attention was given to maintain the whole historical city. This physical maintenance of inherited architecture proved to be inadequate in promoting the historical experience.

⁴³ Aga Khan Award for Architecture 1986, Architecture education in the Islamic world: *Proceedings of seminar ten in the series Architectural transformations in the Islamic world, Granada, Spain*, Published by Concept Media Pte. Ltd. Singapore, p. 22.

⁴⁴ Raymond, ‘Urban life and Middle Eastern cities: the traditional Arab city’, p. 220.

⁴⁵ Bonine, ‘Islamic urbanism, urbanites, and the Middle Eastern city’, p.396.

⁴⁶ See Ra’of, I A 2008 (ed.), *Akhbaar Baghdad wa ma jawaraha min Al-Bilad* by Mahmud Shukri Al-Alusi (Arabic), Beirut, Addar Alarabiyya lilmawso’at.

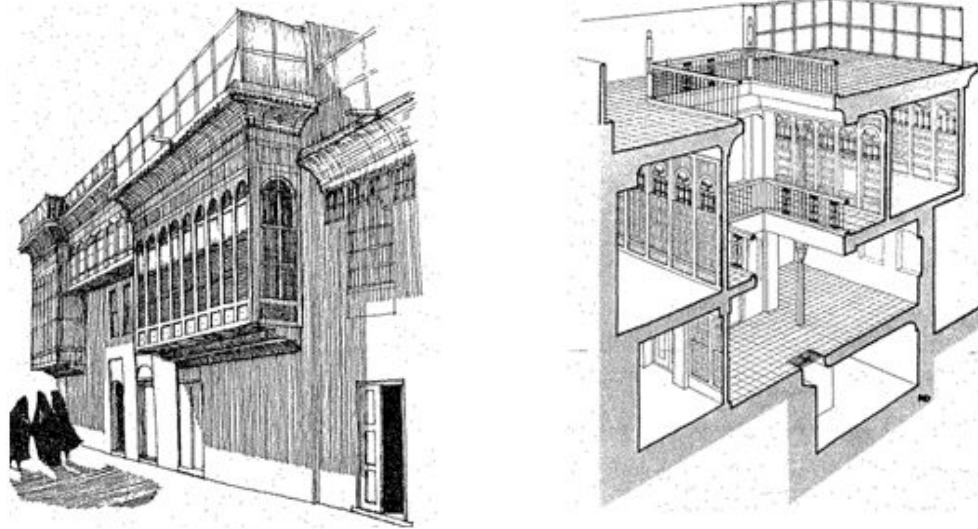


Figure 3: The unique housing typology of old Baghdad [Warren & Fethi 1982]

Baghdad of the Ottomans was gradually transformed in the twentieth century until becoming the central business district of greater Baghdad at present. Like many other historical cities in the area, the city suffered a great loss because three major streets were cut through the unique organic urban fabric parallel to the Tigris River. The old city's fabric contains courtyard houses with irregular alleys in addition to numerous mosques. The residential neighbourhoods were transformed to serve as specialised markets, and the surviving mosques and tombs retained their functions. The Ottoman government office, or Saray, continued to host government functions until the mid-twentieth century, when it was declared a heritage building. It stands today without any function except the heritage purpose which turned it into a mute body and reduced its interaction with society.

The term 'heritage' or its Arabic substitution '*turath*', held unlimited space in conservation studies, since it was connected to inherited architectural and urban forms which represent unique aesthetic and construction features. This use of the term is a result of the remoteness of attitude that considers productions of the past as part of the antiquity of historical experience, and creates barriers to the continuous enrichment of that experience. The awareness of heritage among local architects, though, was increasing in the 1970s to face the major transformations of urban forms during the colonialism era, and the spread of global and international language in architecture. As a result, many forums were held to discuss the *turath* protection, and various institutes were established to institute methods for conservation. Among the Iraqi architects who led this appreciation movement of heritage and traditional architecture in the 1980s are Ihsan Fethi, Mohammed Makkiyya and Rifa'at Chadirji. One of the key conservation schemes is the 'urban infill' scheme which is supposed to repair broken urban fabric by creating new 'physical' typologies relating to traditional models. Other conservation schemes include adapting to local habits and climatic factors and inserting protected courtyards in different buildings.

Among the significant studies of heritage is the study of traditional houses in Baghdad by Warren and Fethi, which examined old Baghdadi houses in two sites; the Baghdad of the

Ottoman in Rusafa (the central business district today), and Al-Kadhemiyya city in Karkh⁴⁷. These houses are inherited mainly from late nineteenth and early twentieth century Baghdad, yet their characteristics represent no particular phase of development. Warren and Chaderji suggest that the remarkable attributes of these houses are the result of accumulated stylistic expression of “four millennia of developments on the plains of Mesopotamia”⁴⁸. This study is among huge amounts of similar work that intensified in the 1970s and 1980s, documenting the heritage of Baghdad and other parallel cities. Despite the efforts that were initiated to sustain heritage, those forms continue to lose their interaction with daily life, and they are becoming obsolete with time.

It appears that unreliable decisions that have been developed from the casual interpretation of history, that deal disconnectedly with heritage forms and lack appropriate strategy to maintain historic fabric, were among the causes of the continuous damage of heritage. Generally, those studies ascribe considerable influence to Islam for the form and function of what is called Islamic cities. They demonstrate a great sympathy with the continuous loss and damage suffered over time, and therefore recommend appropriating specific features to the new buildings, like pointed arches and ornamentations to give identity to place. In fact, the idea of studying the architecture of Islamic cities was behind the emergence of a vast genre of studies that is concerned with ‘identity of place’. In Baghdad and adjacent cities, studies that aimed to maintain Islamic heritage reached their peak in the 1980s and influenced architecture and urban planning.

There is no doubt that the awareness of any nation of its origins promotes the successful progression of that nation, and if this nation becomes less conscious about its origins, it becomes like an orphan who lacks a sense of belonging. However, the identity of place became a hub for complex issues such as culture, authenticity and placelessness. Those matters are usually discussed in relation to history, geography, art and sociology. While the physical settings of heritage usually prevail, the studies of society and culture are also promoted to specify the identity of place. Studies of identity of place are also favoured by Iraqi architects and planners because they are “strongly related to the cultural values of society”⁴⁹.

Architects like Ihsan Fethi, Rif’at Chadirji and Mohammed Makkiyya are among the supporters of this movement, yet they often question its validity. For instance, in a discussion on Islamic architecture, Chadirji questions the idea of religious architecture and describes so called Islamic architecture as ‘a cultural form of expression’. He remarks that the designation ‘Islamic’ architecture is inappropriate and misleading, for nobody speaks of Christian or Hindu architecture⁵⁰. There is no doubt that heritage forms are important indications of the nation’s roots, because they reflect the city’s origins and provide links for successive generations. Yet they are unable to fully inform present and future architectural relations because of the large and rapid changes that are happening in the world.

⁴⁷ The Tigris River passes through Baghdad and divides it into two sectors; Karkh in the western side of the city and Rusafa in the eastern part. The old city of the Ottomans is situated in Rusafa.

⁴⁸ See Warren, J & Fethi, I 1982, *Traditional houses in Baghdad*, Coach Publishing House, Horsham, England. pp.7,18.

⁴⁹ Vehbi, BO 2008, ‘Conservation of the cultural built heritage of the walled city of Nicosia for sustainability’, in Elwazani S, Al-Qawasmi J (ed.), *Responsibilities and opportunities in architectural conservation; theory, education, & practice*, vol. 2, CSAAR, Amman, p.113.

⁵⁰ Aga Khan Award for Architecture 1986, *Architectural education in the Islamic world : proceedings of seminar ten in the series: Architectural transformations in the Islamic world*, Granada, Spain, Published by Concept Media Pty. Ltd. Singapore, p.22.

The notion of culture and the wide use of cultural studies to provide sources for local identity of place can be considered as a creation of the project of Islamic city. The global awareness and endeavour to promote socio cultural studies is reflected in the numerous writings in the last few decades. Scholars like Rapoport implemented the idea that socio-cultural variables play a major role in the urban environment, and this is a form of communication and a medium for controlling communications among individuals and groups. He considers that the built environment can usefully embody cultural ways of patterning⁵¹, which is a way of reducing social and environmental information burden. However, he raises a comparison between American cities and Islamic cities as exemplifiers of different organisations of the urban setting: “While U.S. cities maximise movement and accessibility, traditional Moslem cities limit movement and control behaviour by controlling mobility”⁵².

The basic criterion of utilising culture is to validate material qualities with non-material values and with meaningful use of historical structures. The term ‘cultural heritage’ has emerged subsequently, its definition broadened to include cultural assets that are associated with beliefs, artistic works, or those which “exhibit an important interchange of human values over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world”⁵³. As a result, cultural studies have become a fundamental theme in a wide range of disciplinary studies, including architecture. The association of cities with geographical, spiritual or national settings stresses the differences and makes the outcomes of the evaluation unjustified. Samer Akkach argues that the notion of culture was, from the very beginning, inevitably linked to both notions of ‘difference’, and difference was seen through the lens of culture as a cultural difference that is necessarily placed in a definable geography⁵⁴. Therefore, architectural studies focused on culture as a bounding system that is rooted in a specific geography.

This approach created difficult challenges to a rapid march towards globalisation in the world today, including isolation, standstill and lack of progression. Akkach points out that the boundaries this approach has created have now unfolded, and that historians and theorists in many fields are now rethinking the meanings, validity and relevance of categories that were once outlined by conventional racial, religious, geographic or cultural references, such as Arab, Islamic, Middle Eastern, Asian, European and so on⁵⁵. If limits and boundaries are created by current conventional definitions of culture, then this term needs another definition that outlines a positive diversity in a coherent world. Perhaps freeing culture from geographic and religious association introduces it as an autonomous form of human achievement and as a great experience for civilisation as a whole. In this way, the role of culture in examining collective memories, the writing of history, and the construction of national identities becomes more informative, yet steady and productive.

It seems after a whole century of initiating these studies, the will to discover more about these cities and study them from a different perspective is strongly increasing. Richard Ettinghausen states that it is only recently that historians began to chart different criteria of

⁵¹ Rapoport, A 1977, *Human aspects of urban form: towards a man-environment approach to urban form and design*, 1st edn, Urban and regional planning series ; v. 15, Pergamon Press, Oxford, pp. 265-333.

⁵² Rapoport, A 1977, *Human aspects of urban form : towards a man-environment approach to urban form and design*, 1st edn, p. 21.

⁵³ Vehbi, ‘Conservation of the cultural built heritage of the walled city of Nicosia for sustainability’, p.113.

⁵⁴ Akkach, S 2002, ‘On culture’, in Akkach S & University of Adelaide Centre for Asian & Middle Eastern Architecture (eds.), *De-placing difference: architecture, culture and imaginative geography*, Centre for Asian and Middle Eastern Architecture, The University of Adelaide, p.183.

⁵⁵ Akkach, ‘On culture, p. 184.

Islamic cities, including political, social, linguistic, religious, and intellectual principles⁵⁶. The problem of culture and heritage took on a universal scope. The increasing impact of multi-cultural phenomena in many countries urged architects and other scholars to search for a new model for architectural interpretation. For example, in the multi-cultural setting of Australia, Helen Armstrong introduced a theoretical model that can be transformed to a conceptual model by utilising historical understanding, and analysing landscapes into human categories⁵⁷. She implies that the possibility of introducing a unique model lies in the fertile theoretical area between heritage and cultural landscape, and that the theoretical model should keep developing and transforming into a conceptual model, and vice versa, until understanding occurs. In these relationships, text plays a crucial role to enhance the interpretation of architecture.

The interpretation of historical texts encompasses an analysis of all relevant disciplines and raises a number of questions that should be addressed adequately. Because this kind of representation of architecture is among the recent methods in historiography, and because it leads to the interpretation of poetry and literature, which are the components of the suggested method in this study, I will discuss it separately in the next chapter.

1.5 Historiography and Textual Representation of Architecture

“Interpreting the architectural images from historical texts is useful for highlighting the multivalent historical experience of architecture”⁵⁸

The idea of reading architecture from text is among the ‘tools’ suggested by architectural historians and other scholars to promote the understanding of historical architecture⁵⁹. Because people are still collectively envisioning architecture through its physical body, often recognised by pictorial images, the issue of interpreting texts to extract architectural meaning has been questioned for its validity in providing access to the layers of meanings of the historical experience and reliability, as a source for architectural understanding. Although textual metaphor has been used in architecture, reading architecture as a text has been excluded as an effective source in conventional historiography, because of the extensive focus of postmodern thought on the objective scientific criteria of history. However, textual representation of architecture is gradually becoming a major source in architectural historiography, because it has the potential to be an influential tool to unveil more historical material and promote more understanding of the architectural and urban experience. Hence, it is crucial to search for a preeminent method to read those texts and reach a high level of understanding.

The important aspect of studying architecture and urban history from text is that this process offers more understanding of the city, its foundation and its connections at many levels,

⁵⁶ Ettinghausen, R, Grabar, O & Jenkins, M 2001, *Islamic art and architecture 650-1250*, Pelican History of Art, Yale University Press, New Haven, CT.

⁵⁷ Armstrong, H & Queensland University of Technology Cultural Landscape Research Unit 2001, ‘Setting the theoretical scene’, *Investigating Queensland’s cultural landscapes: contested terrains series; report 1*, Cultural Landscape Research Unit, Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane, p.12.

⁵⁸ Morkoc, SB 2008, ‘Reading architecture from the text: The Ottoman story of the four marble columns’, in *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, vol 1 issue 67, p. 47.

⁵⁹ Among those scholars are: Michael Cooperson, Hans-Georg Gadamer, Selen Morkoc, Samer Akkash, Edward Said and Sibel Bozdogan.

including constitutional, political, environmental, and social levels. The prevailing method of architectural historical studies in relation to Baghdad and the Islamic world usually examines historical texts by visualising architecture as a mass, and searching for the interpretation of architecture through examining the ideas represented by form in historical texts. In the last several decades, this scheme has developed further by utilising texts to discover the space created by those forms and to view architecture as a cosmological metaphor. With this approach, artistic work and human creation are considered as parts of a network of collective characteristics that shape the space. The French art historian and professor of Islamic art and architecture, Oleg Grabar highlights this approach in relation to Baghdad's history: "The true significance of Baghdad lies not so much in the physical character of its forms as in the ideas suggested by the forms"⁶⁰.

However, this approach did not provide an adequate interpretation of the absences in the historiography of Baghdad, and did not explain the mysterious characteristics of this history. Among recent approaches to historical texts is what is outlined by Selen Morkoc to approach the text from "an experiential perspective that sees architecture as an occasion rather than an object"⁶¹, to promote historical understanding. She suggests when revealing inherent data in such texts, it is more productive to ask dialogic questions rather than identifying the ways in which these historical texts are instrumental in architectural historiography⁶². I think this approach presents a deeper understanding of history if dialogic questions follow logical systematic approaches. These approaches are discussed thoroughly in Chapter Two of this thesis.

The different texts inherited from eighteenth and nineteenth century Baghdad contain a wealth of inspiring perspectives. Yet, these texts need to be examined carefully, because they may not represent the 'real image' clearly. This is due to the different motives of historians and other writers, who may have changed or obscured information, especially if the texts were written in obligation to a highly-positioned personal request. Despite that, concurrent prose work usually represents many similarities and brings in a wealth of ideas about the city and the society that cannot be found in other resources. One might think that textual representation is implemented in this research because of the shortage of sufficient images and historical material of late eighteenth century Baghdad. Although it is true that visual illustrations of this period are few, the purpose of textual representation and of interrogating literature and poetry in this study is to act as an aid for the interpretation of architecture and urban history in general, and to represent another method in historiography, regardless of the place and timing of the historical event.

1.6 The Imperative for another Method

The investigation of the specific context of Baghdad's architecture in relation to conventional historiographical methods revealed gaps in current historiographical techniques that substituted the accumulation of more than four thousand years of architectural and urban experience with superficial techniques that were not based on a deep understanding of history. The confusion and misinterpretation introduced by conventional historiographical techniques of mass interpretation, spatial analysis and segregation indicates the crucial need for another method in historiography. This method requires a theoretical framework that helps to develop

⁶⁰ Grabar, *The formation of Islamic art*, p. 69.

⁶¹ Morkoc, 'Reading architecture from the text', p. 38.

⁶² Morkoc, 'Reading architecture from the text', p. 47.

the ideas drawn by texts into concepts of place. Acting collectively with current methods in historiography, the alternative method enhances more understanding of the urban history of the city, and assists in developing future schemes.

The investigation of the possible methodologies for another interpretation of the social urban history of Baghdad requires a comparative analysis of current theoretical contexts. This inquiry examines the tools that assist in setting up an alternative theoretical framework, and which promotes more discoveries of the ignored themes and overlooked urban spaces in the historiography of Baghdad. The search encompasses studies of history and historical writings, modes of representation, the theory of knowledge and understanding and urban literature. The methodological analysis is outlined in Chapter Two of this thesis. Chapter Three examines the conventional historiography of Baghdad critically. It addresses the history of the Ottomans, the urban history of Baghdad in general, and the history of Baghdad during Mamluks' rule. The historical accounts in this chapter are studied in relation to modes of representation and interpretation in conventional historiography rather than narrating mere historical events.

Chapter Four examines the urban literature phenomenon and the history of poetry in Baghdad. This chapter also encompasses a textual representation of poetry and literature composed in the period preceding the eighteenth century. The aim is to ensure the applicability of the alternative method that focuses on continuous movement in history, and explore the ignored and discounted criteria of the city that are not presented in conventional historiography. Chapter Five undertakes a representation of late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries urban literature and poetry in relation to the urban history of Baghdad. The study interrogates the relevant literature and poetry of three main scholars; Kadhém Al-Uzari, Abdul-Rahman Al-Suwaidi, and Saleh Al-Tamimi, in addition to prose works by other scholars. The focus is on the vital role of this method in representing the urban history of Baghdad and providing valuable information, which qualifies these works as important sources in historiography.

In Chapter Six, the travellers' observations on Baghdad of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries are explored and discussed in relation to historiography. The modes of historical writings and the important input of these remarks are emphasised in this chapter. Chapter Seven includes a comparative analysis of the outcomes of the alternative method and the outcomes of conventional historiography. In addition, it discusses the results of the textual representation of poetry, literature, and travelogues, in order to examine the validity of the new approach. Finally Chapter Eight includes a summary of the research outcomes, with a conclusion and recommendations.

2 Alternative Methods in Historiography: A Methodology

2.1 Historiography and the Crisis of Representation

“For everywhere that communication happens, language not only is used but is shaped as well”¹

This chapter discusses conventional historiography methods, and addresses the problems of architectural representation in general. It also examines current theories and doctrines in relation to historical understanding and re-interpretation of history. The issues are discussed collectively, but the outcomes of these discussions focus basically on Baghdad’s historiography in particular, as seeking an alternative method for Baghdad’s historiography is the ultimate goal of this research. The investigation of the crisis of conventional methodologies is increasingly dominating historical studies, because of the insufficient and contradictory tendency of conventional historiography that relies upon iconic recollections of history, and utilises the visible rather than opening up to approaches that maintain diverse relationships with a vast range of social and human sciences. Historiography studies are gradually becoming a major focus of architectural historians who are shifting their emphasis “from the aesthetics of architecture to the politics of production process”² in order to allow more openness and more variety of representation.

The term ‘representation’ is defined conventionally by Edmund Bacon as “the means by which spatial concepts are reduced to tangible images”³. This definition narrows the recognition of history to physical elements. Undoubtedly, the spatial scope of structures is wider than mass structures, yet spatial relations do not have the capacity to provide a full understanding of original ideas and the historical architectural experience. Representation indicates presenting something that has been presented before. Felix Korner suggests that the actual use of the prefix ‘re’ captures return as well as transformation⁴. This explains the many changes that accompany every representation process. Bernard Lewis notes that “the early expressions of the collective memory of a community are usually literary”⁵. He proposes that neglecting history and taking historical facts too lightly are the main causes of historiography problems. Furthermore, Edward Said considers repetition and the strange variety of discourse today as a result of the decline in representation⁶.

¹ Gadamer, HG 1982, *Reason in the age of science*, MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass, p. 4.

² Kasaba, RA & Bozdogan, S 1997, *Rethinking modernity and national identity in Turkey*, University of Washington Press, Seattle, p. 146.

³ Bacon, EN 1967, *Design of cities*, Thames and Hudson, London, p. 30.

⁴ Korner, F 2005, *Revisionist Koran hermeneutics in contemporary Turkish university theology: rethinking Islam*, Ergon, Wurzburg, p.15.

⁵ Lewis, *History: remembered, recovered, invented*, p. 43.

⁶ Said, EW 1985, *Beginnings: intention and method*, Columbia University Press, New York, p. 302.

The unfolding of modern natural science, and the global domination of scientific methods, are considered among the causes of representation crisis in historiography. Scientific attitudes undervalued history in representation, and thus had a great impact on historical writings. These methods raised questions about the uniform effects of history, its continuous progress and directionality, and whether it is possible for industrialised societies to return to what is called pre-modern or pre-scientific circumstances⁷. This dilemma became a major focus for historians and raised arguments that invoked attempts to 'correct' confused historical statements. In his book "*The end of history and the last man*" Francis Fukuyama suggests that modern economics are forcing the homogenisation of mankind, and destroying a wide variety of traditional cultures in the process. However, he considers cultures as "potential obstacles in the march of the Universal History"⁸. Subsequently, cultures have been critiqued as "barriers to social mobility"⁹ and to the integration of humanity. This tension between cultural relativism and universalism "is very much a modern-day phenomenon"¹⁰. Mark Crinson points out the great gap between modernity and culture, and calls it a crisis of architectural typology loss, when modernism outcomes augmented the contrast between history and memory¹¹.

The issue of memory loss has become a major concern in historiographical studies. Crinson suggests that extreme memory loss and the loss of familiarity contribute to the problem because post-modern urbanism "treats the past as something to be quoted selectively, something already deracinated"¹². Gadamer suggests a major reconstruction and reformation of memory to cure this memory loss, as "memory is not memory for anything and everything"¹³. The reconstruction process involves imagination, examination, and a different reading of history. The idea of reconstructing memory is also supported by Michael Tawa. He proposes that the memories of the past can be constructed into numerous mental maps, each registering difference and otherness in specific ways. Here "spatial narratives give way to itineraries, rhythms, modes of use and ways of being in the world"¹⁴. The reconstruction of memory can lead to discoveries of more secrets of the past, but the process should be performed with careful attention to the historical credibility and validity of the whole process.

Another cause of the problems of representation is suggested by Paul Rabinow. He proposes that the relations of structure, history and style are increasingly becoming problematic. He argues that the crisis of conventional historiography and current representation of architectural history took place with the shift of the vocabulary of architectural form, from architectural type and its historicity and formalisation to architectural style, since "once ancient models were seen as only one among many possible solutions to a given architectural problem, the meaning of style in architecture gained an entirely new value, or more

⁷ Fukuyama, F 1992, *The end of history and the last man*, Free Press; Maxwell Macmillan Canada Macmillan International, New York, Toronto, p 81.

⁸ Fukuyama, *The end of history and the last man*, p. 235.

⁹ Sluglett, P 2008, *The urban social history of the Middle East, 1750-1950*, 1st edn, Syracuse University Press, Syracuse, N.Y., p. 39.

¹⁰ Gunn, GC 2003, *First globalisation: the Eurasian exchange, 1500-1800, World social change*, Rowman & Littlefield, Lanham, MD, p. 284.

¹¹ Crinson, *Urban memory*, p. xiii.

¹² Crinson, *Urban memory*, p. xi.

¹³ Gadamer, H-G 1997, *Truth and method*, 2nd rev. edn, Continuum, New York, p. 16.

¹⁴ Tawa, M 1999, 'Imaging a place: mapping Alexandria', in Akkach, S, Fung, S, Scriver, P & University of Adelaide, *Self, place & imagination: cross-cultural thinking in architecture*, 1st edn, Centre for Asian & Middle Eastern Architecture, University of Adelaide, Adelaide, p.141.

accurately, took on value”¹⁵. Type is the exemplifier of uniform representation, and scientific advancement played an important role in undermining one dimension of the classical theory of type¹⁶. Rabinow considers the intentional move toward a kind of humanism as “one consequence of the dissolution of architecture’s ability to represent character and order”¹⁷. I believe that the deterioration and decline of type in architecture is not a result of scientific advancement, which can be considered a constructive movement in history in general. The key problem in this situation is the tools and methods that were used in the modern advance, rather than mere scientific progression.

Current methods are underestimating the social phenomenon which is “the world problem that preoccupies thought today and touches its core reality”¹⁸. The problematic relation between history and society needs to be recognised, as “neither the life of an individual nor the history of a society can be understood without understanding both”¹⁹. Historians explain that categories of the self are dependent upon particular cultural and historical practices and that analyses of those categories are essential in founding a strong starting point for critical historical studies. Selen Morkoc emphasises the significance of insight into the city as a social phenomenon. She notes that “any social formation, if restored in its perennial form, could live eternally”²⁰. These approaches have changed the methods of representation of urban history and opened up urban studies to a wide range of disciplines.

On the other hand, Sibel Bozdogan suggests that historiographical problems have increased because architectural history is mainly Eurocentric and historiography emphasises cultural difference rather than cultural diversity²¹. Geoffrey Gunn considers secularism as one of the key products of the tension between modernity and culture²². Secularism, as Morroe Berger suggests, was a challenge to Islam in the nineteenth century when the ‘modernist’ attempted to interpret Islam liberally²³. In addition to comparative, descriptive and repetitive tendencies, one of the main problems of conventional historiography is the implementation of puzzling terminologies. Because it plays a great role in historiography, terminology has a great impact on the understanding and representation of architectural history. As Gadamer suggests, language “attained a central position within the philosophy of our century”²⁴.

Conventional methods often freeze terminologies in abstract linguistic frames and do not let words move in both practical and spiritual spheres. For example, terms like pre-modern and post-modern establish a cut in the concept of time flow and give the impression of greatly separated periods that lack any sign of continuity. Another example of confused terminologies is the use of the term ‘civilisation’ which generally refers to an advanced state of any human society, though in current historiography, as Nilfur Gole suggests, it does not

¹⁵ Rabinow, P 1989, *French modern: norms and forms of the social environment*, MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass, p. 47.

¹⁶ Rabinow, *French modern*, p. 49.

¹⁷ Rabinow, *French modern*, p. 67.

¹⁸ Al-Sadr, M- B 2006, *Our philosophy*, Qum, Ansarriyan Publications, p. 61.

¹⁹ Mills, C 1959, *The social imagination*, Oxford University Press, New York, p. 3.

²⁰ Morkoc, A *study of Ottoman narratives on architecture: text*, p. 29.

²¹ Bozdogan, S 1984, ‘Architectural History in professional Education: reflections on postcolonial challenges to the modern Survey’, *Journal of Architectural Education*, vol. 37, pp. 207-215.

²² Lewis, B 2002, *What went wrong? The clash between Islam and modernity in the Middle East*, Weidenfeld & Nicholson, London, p. 96.

²³ Berger, M 1964, *The Arab world today*, 2 edn, Doubleday & Company Anchor Book, Garden City, N.Y., pp. 415-417.

²⁴ Gadamer, *Reason in the age of science*, p. 4.

refer in a historically relevant way to particular cultures, but instead denotes the historical superiority of the West as the producer of modernity²⁵.

Further, the term 'traditional' is widely used to refer to some human communities that are linked to religion as a form of social organisation whose continuation does not rely on the existence of a specific nation. According to Steve Fuller, anthropologists and sociologists largely use religion as "a residual term designed to cover all so called traditional forms of social life"²⁶. Fukuyama suggests that the understanding of history as a single, coherent, evolutionary process, when taking into account the experience of all peoples in all times, is mostly associated with philosophers like Hegel and Marx, and it is "implicit in our use of words like 'primitive' or 'advanced', 'traditional' or 'modern', when referring to different types of human societies"²⁷. On the other hand, Lewis calls terms like barbarism and backwardness 'official myths' which were effectively used by the French to legitimise their occupation of North Africa²⁸.

It is worth noting, while the term 'tradition' is frequently used by Eurocentric historiography to define specific entities such as traditional art and architecture and traditional cities, the associated term 'culture' is used often to label the behavioural actions and education of social groups. Conversely, traditional (*taqlidi*) in Arabic identifies the inherited norms and customs, and culture which refers to civilisation (*hadhara*) in Arabic is not commonly employed as much as the original term 'civilisation'. These linguistic contradictions indicate the fragility of some terms like 'culture', yet they still hold a central position in historical research.

To solve the problem of social, cultural, and traditional misrepresentation, Samer Akkach suggests implementing symbolic architectural criteria. He advises that the interpretive condition is influenced by a preoccupation with artistic creativity and a desire to understand the creative mechanism of imagination, both at human and divine level. He suggests a comprehensive reading of both universal natural symbols and specific symbols, and he focuses on the idea of the 'sacred' as "a key concept in modern discourses of the symbolism of pre-modern architecture"²⁹. In order to promote a range of explorations that could enrich the understanding of architectural imagination, Akkach suggests shifting the focus from "the unchanging essentiality of form, style and aesthetics onto the multiple and changing concepts of self and place that arise in cross-cultural encounters"³⁰. He indicates two strategies that might be fruitfully tested; learning about comparative philosophy, and also about literature.

The examination of the causes of current historiographical problems outlined different problems of conventional historiography and diverse strategies to solve these problems. Because historical moments are generated by other moments that contribute to their creation, highlighting particular literary and social attributes, and interconnecting them with sources from other disciplines would generate more possibilities of a comprehensive examination of history, promote integrated historiographies that ensure connectivity between all the elements that created the city, and represent meaning in their relationship to one another. However, it is imperative to outline the challenges that accompany any attempt to establish another method

²⁵ Kasaba & Bozdogan, *Rethinking modernity and national identity in Turkey*, p. 85.

²⁶ Fuller S 2006, *The new sociological imagination*, SAGE, London; Thousand Oaks, California, p. 133.

²⁷ Fukuyama, *The end of history and the last man*, p. xii.

²⁸ Lewis, *History: remembered, recovered, invented*, p. 9.

²⁹ Akkach, S 2005, *Cosmology and architecture in pre-modern Islam: an architectural reading of mystical idea*, SUNY series in Islam, State University of New York Press, Albany, N.Y. S., p. 162.

³⁰ Akkach, Fung, Fung & Scriver (eds.), *Self, place & imagination*, p. v.

in historiography at present. The scholars' perspectives in relation to architecture unfold at the intersection of three related areas of study; the role of history in architectural representation, the arguments on modernity and culture, and diverse concepts of art and aesthetics. These issues are discussed in the next sections.

2.2 The Major Challenges to the Rewriting of History

2.2.1 The Role of History in Representation

“What happened, what we recall, what we recover, what we relate, are often sadly different, and the answers to our questions may be both difficult to seek and painful to find”³¹

The study of history involves an examination of different aspects of humanity, and a search in many directions of changeable human attitudes towards nature and the world. This broad scope of history made it “the mother of all the sciences of man”³². History has the capacity to collect and restore accumulated human experience, as it “preserves for posterity what has fallen into oblivion”³³. In general, history maybe defined as a record or memory of past events. It is also defined as “a dimension of existence in which present realities can be rightly interpreted only through the memory of past events”³⁴. Another definition of history by Edward Said suggests that history is “a complex interaction between uneven economics, societies, and ideologies”³⁵. Throughout the long procession of humanity, history has been written for different purposes. It may be written for political or documentary purposes or for the purpose of entertainment; by exaggerating some events to raise social interaction, or by modifying authentic stories to maintain the sanctity of some figures, and take them to a mythical standard above what they really are. So, the study of history could sometimes take place as an indulgent intellectual exercise, or to satisfy the needs of people for stories, visions and images of the past.

The academic approaches to history are usually associated with a sincere search for ‘what has really happened’ in a specific period of time, without a considered attention to the significant implications of those events, and their moral indications. There is no doubt that establishing what happened is important, and this technique is considered a great achievement of academic studies. Also starting from scratch with a lack of knowledge about the historical experience, wastes too much time and effort to explore the development stages of that experience. However, history cannot become a positive source for human knowledge unless its investigative goals are directed towards extracting lessons leading to more experimentation, in order to establish extra values and rules for both the present and the future, otherwise “past events would become like straws scattered by the wind”³⁶.

The history of humanity is subject to freedom and choice. The history of humanity is full of great achievements and successful experiences. It is also full of failures because of the specific freedom humans enjoy, and the wide range of choices they gain. The different views

³¹ Lewis, *History; remembered, recovered, invented*, p. 71.

³² Foucault, M 2002, *The order of things: an archaeology of the human sciences*, Routledge, London, New York, p. 400.

³³ Ansari, *Secularism, Islam, modernity*, p.20.

³⁴ Niebuhr, R 1949, *Faith and history: a comparison of Christian and modern views of history*, Nisbet, London, p. 20.

³⁵ Said, EW 1983, *The world, the text, and the critic*, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, p. 222.

³⁶ Ansari, *Secularism, Islam, modernity*, p.20.

regarding history are underlined by Shamsuddin, who notes that the consideration of history as correct and progressive in all its parts is a fatal mistake, and if we depict historical experience literally, past mistakes will be compounded by more mistakes, and that will give rise to more disasters and tragedies. He also calls it a 'fatal mistake' to reject the past and its productions, and considers learning from the past as a recurring move, because every significant experience in history involved many difficulties and sacrifices, and the rejection of those incidents destroys the past efforts and hinders the development process of humanity³⁷. Therefore, it is always important to envision past, present and future experiences equally without dominating one over the rest.

The problem of architectural history is relatively new, as new areas of historical inquiry are being explored as a result of the dramatic change in design attitudes. Anthony Vidler highlights the importance of the historian's work, stating that our knowledge of architecture depends on it, and that learning about architecture's past forms is learning architecture itself³⁸. In addition, Morkoc links historical architecture to the expression of meaning "where human experience is ambivalent, oscillating between the past and present of individuals and collectives"³⁹. Debate in history has increased in the twentieth century because of the immense changes in ideologies, and methods of building and planning. For architects and historians, city spaces and architectural landscapes became "the active systemisers of memory"⁴⁰. Yet the paradoxical theories embedded within the new methodologies transformed past events into a body of research based on images drawn from history books, finding its sense of history through conventional comparisons, and forming views of the city from mythical stories⁴¹.

Consequently, the ruins of the past were admired romantically for their antique features and for the influence they exercised on the viewer's imagination. Although they exemplify past experiences, the original intentions of historical buildings have shifted and transformed throughout time⁴², which makes understanding them a complex task. The deliberate erosion of the pure features of memory, and the temporal gap, formed the beginning of the memory crisis. This crisis affected historic preservation projects that became concerned with context as a key element. The subject of memory occupied a great proportion of current historical research, and consequently, various approaches were suggested by different scholars to restore memory. Gadamer brings up an interesting definition to memory as "the presence of an absent one in his absence"⁴³. He states that the poet succeeds in turning memory into a magnetism of what lies in the future, which is "the meaning of a very specific presence"⁴⁴. This is a positive approach towards effectively diminishing the temporal gap created by conventional histories.

³⁷ Shamsuddin, MM 1972, *Harakat Al-Tarekh inda Al-Imam Ali* (Arabic) viewed 23 July 2013,

<<http://www.alseraj.net/maktaba/kotob/mtanwe/tarekhwharakat/maktaba/motafariqa/t-attareekh/a1.htm>>.

³⁸ Akcan, E 1984, 'Histories of the immediate present: inventing architectural modernism - edited by Anthony Vidler', *Journal of Architectural Education*, vol. 62, no. 3 pp. 89-90.

³⁹ Morkoc, A *study of Ottoman narratives on architecture*, p. 11.

⁴⁰ Boyer, MC 1994, *The city of collective memory: its historical imagery and architectural entertainments*, MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass, p. 137.

⁴¹ Boyer, *The city of collective memory*, p. 313.

⁴² Morkoc, A *study of Ottoman narratives on architecture*, p. 11.

⁴³ Gadamer, HG 1994, *Literature and philosophy in dialogue: essays in German literary theory*, State University of New York Press, Albany, p. 82.

⁴⁴ Gadamer, *Literature and philosophy in dialogue*, p. 83.

Historians thus have agreed on the importance of historical studies in architecture. However, the conventional methods suggested to understand history and rewrite it were insufficient. The general approach of rewriting history developed into a search for original sources and real historical backings. Yet the rewriting process encompasses many issues in representation. Bernard Lewis identifies three types of history; remembered, recovered, and invented⁴⁵. He points out that critical history begins with dissatisfaction with memory and a desire to cure its deficiencies. Invented history is of several types and has several functions, and its broad aim is “to correct or remove what is distasteful of the past, and replace it with something more acceptable, more encouraging, and more conducive to the purpose in hand”⁴⁶. He suggests another function; ‘to legitimise authority’, and “assert new claims and new arguments, sometimes even a new identity, in conflict with the old order”⁴⁷. These remarks refer to the dangerous task of representing history, and the fundamental need to establish constructive methods of representation.

Lewis illustrates the motives of critiquing histories and identifies positive incentives of the recovery of history of inventive schemes; the recovery of history usually begins with what is remembered and transmitted, and that “the critical scholar may be dissatisfied with what remembered history offers him because he feels that it is inaccurate or deficient or misleading”⁴⁸. However, he points out that there are negative aspects of rewriting history, when such dissatisfactions emerge from a different cause. Historians would rather rewrite history not as it was, or as they have been taught that it was, but as they would prefer it to have been. For historians of this school “the purpose of changing the past is not to seek some abstract truth but to achieve a new vision of the past better suited to their needs in the present and their aspirations for the future. Their aim is to amend, to restore, to replace, or even to recreate the past in a more satisfactory form”⁴⁹. Lewis calls this process ‘the invention of the past’. The fundamental feature of this kind of scholarly research is that it is always directed towards pre-set outcomes, which raises questions about its historical credibility and acceptance.

A particular example of embellishment to correct or remove unpleasantness of the past is what Lewis identifies as a ‘foundation myth’. “Most countries and peoples and powers arise from humble origins and having risen to greatness, seek to improve or conceal their undistinguished beginnings and attach themselves to something older and greater”⁵⁰. He notes that the recovery of history is basically a phenomenon that began in Europe at the time of the Renaissance and remains to the present day primarily a concern and an achievement of Western European civilization. He particularly recognises the writing of colonial, post-colonial, and pre-colonial histories as outstanding examples of the purposeful use of historiography. Consequently, the official myths about barbarism and backwardness that were challenged and criticised are obvious examples of inventive historiography⁵¹.

Although the purposeful use of historiography is highly evident in colonial related histories, the modification of history is noticeable in almost all written histories. Nonetheless, Lewis’s remarks are strongly relevant to the urban history of Baghdad which was apparently

⁴⁵ Lewis, *History: remembered, recovered, invented*, p. 71.

⁴⁶ Lewis, *History: remembered, recovered, invented*, pp. 56, 57.

⁴⁷ Lewis, *History: remembered, recovered, invented*, pp. 61- 64.

⁴⁸ Lewis, *History: remembered, recovered, invented*, p. 55.

⁴⁹ Lewis, *History: remembered, recovered, invented*, p. 55.

⁵⁰ Lewis, *History: remembered, recovered, invented*, p. 59.

⁵¹ Lewis, *History: remembered, recovered, invented*, p. 91.

subjected to inventive historiography, especially during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Conventional historiography of Baghdad in this period is contradictory. A reading of this historiography reveals the uneven reflection of natural and cultural landscapes. It also indicates superficial observations based on perceived aesthetics and political circumstances, in addition to preconceived judgments backed by a lack of historical understanding. The complex history of the city and the indeterminacy in the interpretation of architectural and urban forms contribute to this historiographical confusion, which enables it to be a fertile ground for new interpretations.

2.2.2 The Clash between Modernity and Culture

“When one talks of modern life or modern age, one has already assumed that modernity is shared by the inhabitants of the entire civilised world, fully developed or in the process of development. This assumption is not, however, totally correct”⁵²

This study has already noted the impacts of modernity on historiography. However, the focus in this section is on the relationship between modernity and culture in the region of Baghdad, during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Historians state that in this period, the impacts of modernity were irresistible, and the Ottomans were “increasingly unable to meet the challenges of the later decades of the eighteenth century”⁵³. Youssef Choueiri suggests that Ottoman *sultans* initiated modernisation efforts, which formed the background to the first stage of the modern movement. Then the direct impact of western culture, commerce, and military power modified and shaped the identities of the cities that were under the Ottoman control⁵⁴. Consequently, as modernisation and globalisation have overtaken these cities, their historic urban fabric witnessed gradual demolition or alteration “leaving little of the urban heritage and urban memory or identity for the new generations”⁵⁵.

It is noteworthy that, if modernity is viewed as a development in human life that introduces new ways of building and advances society, then it can be a positive historical issue. The sensitive changes associated with modernity have more links to specific methods and approaches that emerged with the advancement of modernity rather than modernity itself. Among those approaches in Baghdad and its surrounds is the consideration of the historical development of power and unlimited freedom as the solutions to human confusion. In addition, the rigorous rejection of rational moral philosophy contributed to the negative responses towards modernity. These approaches hastened the drastic changes to the city components, and invoked an urgent need for deeper historical studies. These changes urged historians in the twentieth century to create or discover other ideas to fill these methodological gaps and provide resolutions for the future. The new thoughts contributed to the historical debates on understanding and identification, but their strong connections to geographical settings launched more problems.

The phenomenon of culture is among the powerful emergent concepts representing some aspects of history and society. I propose this concept is one of the creations of modernity as a

⁵² Ansari, *Secularism, Islam, modernity*, p.98.

⁵³ Inalcik, H & Quataert, D 1997, *An economic and social history of the Ottoman Empire*, Volume 2: 1600-1914, 2 vols., Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, p 642.

⁵⁴ Choueiri, YM 2003, *Modern Arab historiography: historical discourse and the nation-state*, Routledge, Curzon, New York, p. 5.

⁵⁵ Choueiri, *Modern Arab historiography*, p. 401.

substitute for the specific norms associated with religious achievements of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Paul Rabinow notes the the idea of culture is not new, as it is related to the distinct locale or habitat. This locale refers - in classical botany - to the area occupied by particular inhabitants and represents a pre-existent harmony between them and the surroundings. He states that with time the term 'conditions of existence' replaced habitat and appeared in the social realm with a new meaning⁵⁶. This understanding establishes that culture has original links to specific geographies, and thus it does not represent a complete historical meaning.

Said points to the creative nature of culture, as people make their own history and extend it to geography. He notes; "both geographical and cultural entities- to say nothing of historical entities- such as locales, regions, geographical sectors as Orient and Occident are manmade"⁵⁷. He indicates that culture normally operates within civil society "where the influence of ideas, of institutions, and of other individuals works not through domination but by ... consent"⁵⁸. He considers Orientalism a 'cultural and political fact'⁵⁹ that has been taking the task of representing the other. He questions the methods used to represent other cultures, and wonders if the notions of a distinct culture, race, religion, or civilisation are useful ones⁶⁰, declaring that he has two fears in relation to these methods; 'distortion and inaccuracy'⁶¹. However, Gadamer emphasises the role of culture as a compound element of people's religious heritage and their own history as both are "part of one's distinctive character"⁶². He suggests culture is a "historical character of preservation"⁶³ and remembering belongs to the historical constitution of man, which is part of his history and his culture⁶⁴. Identity, for him, is "the inseparable belonging together of the real and the ideal, as it is conceived in the principle of intellectual intuition"⁶⁵.

The role of culture as a substitute for religious models established a new vision of religion as an obstacle to modernity. However, history proves that religions were always the motivators for positive changes in the world. One of the consequences of this vision is the image that Islam, in common with other religions "inherently rejects change"⁶⁶. However, scholars like James Kritzeck support the relation between religion and modernity, and state that within Islamic culture many ideas and benefits have radiated to other cultures and that "Islamic culture is unquestionably one of the greater cultures in the history of mankind and of the world today"⁶⁷. Nevertheless, the denial of religions removed values from the historical field, consequently created a range of contradictory historical problems in relation to culture, identity, and place, which had a great impact on the writing of history.

As part of cultural empowerment, ideas that regarded spiritual responsibilities as part of the past turned the focus to culture as the source of historical achievements. For instance,

⁵⁶ Rabinow, *French modern*, p. 31.

⁵⁷ Said, *Orientalism*, p. 5.

⁵⁸ Said, *Orientalism*, p. 7.

⁵⁹ Said, *Orientalism*, p. 13.

⁶⁰ Said, *Orientalism*, p. 235.

⁶¹ Said, *Orientalism*, p. 8.

⁶² Gadamer, HG 2006a, 'Artworks in word and image', in *Theory, Culture, and Society*, vol. 23, no. 1, p. 60.

⁶³ Gadamer, *Truth and method*, p. 12.

⁶⁴ Gadamer, *Truth and method*, p. 15.

⁶⁵ Gadamer, *Literature and philosophy in dialogue*, p. 13.

⁶⁶ Berger, M 1964, *The Arab world today*, p. 417.

⁶⁷ Kritzeck, J 1964, *Anthology of Islamic literature, from the rise of Islam to modern times*, 1st edn, Holt, Rinehart, New York, pp. 15-16.

outlining heritage architecture as ‘ritual architecture’, ‘religious architecture’, or ‘the memory of one’s sacred history’⁶⁸, and associating traditional Islamic architecture with a ‘sacred pattern’⁶⁹ exemplify these attitudes. Another tendency is the ‘classical culture’ phenomenon that “affected the imaginations and sympathies of cultivated men for generations”⁷⁰. According to this, inherited architecture is viewed as an extension to people’s identity⁷¹, and architecture presented as a cultural entity that plays a double role in the investigation of collective memory and the writing of history⁷². These complexities prompted people to identify modernity as an approach “toward the vexing problems of the nature of human history”⁷³.

Scholars proposed some ideas to overcome the problems of modernity and identity. For example, Edward Said notes; “modern thought and experience have taught us to be sensitive to what is involved in representation, in studying the other, in racial thinking, in unthinking and uncritical acceptance of authority and authoritative ideas”⁷⁴. He states that when civilisation moves from Orient to Occident, “the two forms of humanity will at last be soldered together”⁷⁵, thus identifying a beginning of an historical movement or a realm of thought is certainly an act of historical understanding⁷⁶. On the other hand, Sibel Bozdoğan recommends a solution for the crisis of representation of architecture in relation to culture, by introducing “new interpretations that problematise distinct and mutually exclusive boundaries between the western canon and other cultures”⁷⁷. One of the interesting approaches to reduce the negative aspects of modernity is that of Jeff Malpas. He recommends a change in the linguistic use of sensitive terms like modernity, as if ‘modern’ represents the authority of western power, then we should use the term ‘new’ instead⁷⁸.

However, more examination is required to challenge the issues of culture and globalisation, to create a positive relationship to past tradition, and place history in a good position that brings benefits and prevents any damage to the city’s future progress. The consideration of architecture as a cultural entity added a great weight to its shoulders and requires more efforts to examine the historical qualities of architecture in order to discover certain identities, and this promotes more openness in architecture to a wide range of disciplines.

⁶⁸ Jones, L & Harvard University Center for the Study of World Religions 2000, *The hermeneutics of sacred architecture: experience, interpretation, comparison*, 2 vols, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass, pp. 109, 119, 185.

⁶⁹ Akkach, S 1990, *The sacred pattern of traditional Islamic architecture according to Sufi doctrine: a study in architectural symbolism*, thesis, University of Sydney.

⁷⁰ Boyer, *The city of collective memory*, p. 155.

⁷¹ Boyer, *The city of collective memory*, p. 309.

⁷² Akkach, ‘On Culture’, p. 185.

⁷³ Niebuhr, *Faith and history*, p. 16.

⁷⁴ Said, *Orientalism*, p. 327.

⁷⁵ Said, *Orientalism*, p. 113.

⁷⁶ Said, *Beginnings*, p. 32.

⁷⁷ Bozdoğan, ‘Architectural history in professional education’, p. 211.

⁷⁸ Malpas, J 2011, Building memory, *Interstices under Construction Symposium*, Launceston, Australia.

2.2.3 Disputed Concepts in Art and Aesthetics

“Of all the things that confront us in nature and history, it is the work of art that speaks to us more directly”⁷⁹

In general, aesthetics refer to a branch of philosophy that deals with the nature of art and the appreciation of beauty, and provides a critical reflection on art, culture and nature. The dominant and popular interests of conventional historiographical discourses on architectural understanding are the artistic intentions and the aesthetic features of architecture. The subjects of art and beauty are complex topics in philosophy because they bring us “into contact not only with the concept of the good but also with the concept of the true”⁸⁰.

The three main theories of interpreting beauty and truth in the works of art are the moral theory that links beauty to the metaphysical and to the influences from the first creation, the empirical theory that interprets art in an abstract way by focusing on the relations between historical and intellectual layers of artistic works, and the subjective method that views art as a form of ‘being’ that has inner beauty performance, and thus considers both moral and empirical theories as inappropriate concepts⁸¹.

The moral theory, also called the sensory theory, is usually associated with ancient philosophies and religious interpretations of art and beauty. Al-Sadr proposes a hypothesis that concentrates on the interlocking criteria of tangible and spiritual matters. He asserts that the interlocking aspects of things would support their interpretation and promote more understanding. He explains that perception is divided into two kinds: conception, which is a simple knowledge, and assent, which involves a judgement. The human mind contains two kinds of conception: simple conceptual ideas and composite ideas, which result from a combination of simple conceptions. A third conception is composed of the two conception types. Consequently, all composed conceptions can be reduced to a simple conceptual unit⁸². Al-Sadr calls this hypothesis ‘the dispossession theory’ which can be summarised in the division of mental conceptions into primary and secondary conceptions. On the basis of this framework the mind gradually establishes secondary conceptions, and as a result the stage of innovation and construction begins⁸³. I believe the proposed interlocking of criteria between tangible and intangible elements would act as an embracing and unifying factor that would solve many representational problems, since interlocking promotes the understanding of all aspects of the historical experience.

On the other hand, Akkach strongly emphasises the role of sensibility in representation and in the search for truth, yet he focuses on the opposing criteria of tangible and intangible elements, instead of highlighting the interlocking aspects between them. He states that human imagination cannot deal with anything that does not have a sensible form, and representation should act as an imaginary reflection of sensible prototypes. He explains that the ‘seen’ or the visible is the world of natural realities that can be known directly through sensory perception, while the unseen is the world of spiritual realities that can only be grasped by imagination. He stresses the fact that religious teachings have resorted to analogy and metaphor in order to

⁷⁹ Gadamer, HG 1977, *Philosophical hermeneutics: Hans-Georg Gadamer*, University of California Press, Berkeley, p. 95.

⁸⁰ Gadamer, *Truth and method*, p. 65.

⁸¹ Gadamer, ‘Artworks in word and image’, p. 75.

⁸² Al-Sadr, *Our philosophy*, p. 63.

⁸³ Al-Sadr, *Our philosophy*, p. 74.

help human imagination gain insight into the unseen, since “the efficacy of analogy, as an illustrative and cognitive tool, hinges on the ontological link between the embodied and the abstract”⁸⁴. Akkach suggests that analogy is the cornerstone of religious expressions concerned with spiritual phenomena, and that “the Quran uses many tangible examples from the seen to explain or describe matters of unseen”⁸⁵. He describes ontology imagination as “the creative source of manifestation, the very cause of our existence, and the powerful intermediary that enables us to remain in constant contact with the infinite and the absolute”⁸⁶.

Scientific theory that implements the concepts of production and reproduction criticised the rational theory that emphasises the truth claim of the beautiful⁸⁷, and recognises the spiritual aspects of art rather than focusing solely on its objectivity. Foucault’s hypothesis of discourse suggests that images are repetitive, and that’s why they cannot hold inner meanings. He notes that “a discourse does not represent an idea, nor does it embody a figure: it simply repeats, in different mode, another discourse”⁸⁸. Said notes Foucault’s notion of discourse makes the Orient “an integral part of European material civilization and culture”⁸⁹. He asserts the impact of the notion of ‘power of choice’ enabled Europe to acknowledge the Orient as the origin of European science “then to treat it as a superseded origin”⁹⁰. He quotes Valéry’s note: “We owe to the Orient all the beginnings of our arts and of a great deal of our knowledge”⁹¹.

In addition to the discourse view, Foucault’s theoretical paradigm of signs refers to the interrelations between things as the main source of their meanings. Said describes this thought as “a feat that moves values from the objects to a privileged space between them”⁹². Rabinow calls this theory an invention of coordination of spatial and social forms. He notes that the experimentation begun in the last two centuries “has been characterised by internationalization of social science and by reform, as well as by technology, colonization, and nationalism”⁹³. In this way, the elements of art and culture are understood in terms of their relationships to a larger system and have no significant individual qualities.

Alternatively, the subjective hypothesis employs the use of the inductive method that is “free from all metaphysical assumptions”⁹⁴. This theory brings subjectivity to aesthetics and art, which is “able to build bridges that reach beyond the enclosure and space in which it originated”⁹⁵. Gadamer replicates the Greek’s conceptual reflections about beauty, and supposes art has its ‘being’ in the vital living event of its appearing and in its performance. “The way of being of the artwork does not reside in its having been created, nor do conceptions like production or reproduction from the side of the receiver hit the point”⁹⁶. The inductive method employs a critique of aesthetic consciousness in order to defend the experience of truth that comes through the work of art against the aesthetic theory that is

⁸⁴ Akkach, *Cosmology and architecture in premodern Islam*, p. 30.

⁸⁵ Akkach, *Cosmology and architecture in premodern Islam*, p. 30.

⁸⁶ Akkach S, 1997, ‘The world of imagination in Ibn Arabi’s ontology’, *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 24, 1, pp. 97-113.

⁸⁷ Gadamer, H-G 1999, *Hermeneutics, religion, and ethics*, Yale University Press, New Haven. p. xii.

⁸⁸ Said, *Beginning*, p. 302.

⁸⁹ Said, *Orientalism*, pp. 1-2.

⁹⁰ Said, *Orientalism*, p. 251.

⁹¹ Said, *Orientalism*, p. 250.

⁹² Said, *Beginnings: intention and method*, p. 338.

⁹³ Rabinow, *French modern*, p. 13.

⁹⁴ Gadamer, *Truth and method*, p. 4.

⁹⁵ Gadamer, ‘Artworks in word and image’, p. 60.

⁹⁶ Gadamer, ‘Artworks in word and image’, p. 75.

restricted to a scientific conception of truth. Thus the truth that lies in every artistic experience is recognised and at the same time mediated with historical consciousness. Gadamer considers human sciences and self-evident concepts like philosophy, art, and history as modes of experience that contain a wealth of history in which the truth is communicated⁹⁷, but cannot be verified by scientific methodological means.

Gadamer suggests the task of aesthetics is precisely to ground the fact that the experience of art is a mode of knowledge that is certainly different from the sensory knowledge, which provides science with the ultimate data that constructs the knowledge of nature, and certainly different from all moral rational knowledge, and from all conceptual knowledge, but still knowledge, conveying truth⁹⁸. Another concept of Gadamer's is interpreting the idea of 'taste' as a social phenomenon, and as an intellectual means of differentiation that implies a mode of knowing. He argues that the corresponding positive is not speaking what is tasteful, but what does not offend taste. Thus, taste is "the object of critical judgment by an observer"⁹⁹, and it's defined precisely by the fact that it is offended by what is tasteless. Gadamer notes the phenomenon of taste clearly involves language, yet the new language certainly does not mean a totally new language¹⁰⁰, because it always relates to other languages and cannot be totally definitive. Therefore the validity of an aesthetic judgment cannot be derived and proved from a universal principle.

In relation to architecture, Gadamer suggests the question of truth arises in architecture specifically, as well as other forms of art like literature, the visual arts, music, dance, and theatre¹⁰¹. Morkoc notes Gadamer reflects on architecture as having a certain weight-carrying and space-creating function, where the performance processes of art process¹⁰². Gadamer refers to the 'absolute presentness of art' that does not belong to a certain time as a contemporary way of interpreting inherited works of art. He suggests combining the claim to absoluteness which belongs to the holy knowledge with the recognition of other traditions, and also developing a commonality with social structures that are completely hostile to religion¹⁰³. He affirms the difficulty of understanding the artistic creations of other ages or distant cultures, yet "in the long run, art in all its innumerable forms gains acceptance even the most strange"¹⁰⁴.

Gadamer believes the arts quietly govern the metaphysical heritage of the Western tradition¹⁰⁵, yet he connects the old relationships of the works of arts to an ideal nature artificially produced in accordance with an idea, which "has ultimately brought about the civilisational pattern of modernity"¹⁰⁶. Although the discussion of art, culture and the role of history in representation as challenges to the history writing process constituted a demonstration of some aspects of current theories, it is helpful to elaborate the main theories of historiographical and intellectual approaches to history in the search for another method on the light of these elaborations.

⁹⁷ Gadamer, *Truth and method*, p. 10.

⁹⁸ Gadamer, *Truth and method*, p. 97.

⁹⁹ Gadamer, *Truth and method*, p. 42.

¹⁰⁰ Gadamer, HG, 2006c, 'Language and understanding 1970', *Theory, culture, and society*, pp. 13-27.

¹⁰¹ Gadamer, 'Artworks in word and image', pp. 57-83.

¹⁰² Gadamer, 'Artworks in word and image', p 79.

¹⁰³ Gadamer, 'Artworks in word and image', pp. 57-83.

¹⁰⁴ Gadamer, 'Artworks in word and image', pp. 57-83.

¹⁰⁵ Gadamer, 'Artworks in word and image', pp. 57-83.

¹⁰⁶ Gadamer, *Reason in the age of science*, p. 70.

2.3 Present Techniques in Historiography

“All interpretation is one sided. It has as its main goal a particular line of aim, a point of view that cannot claim to be absolute”¹⁰⁷

The exploration of the various thoughts concerning the interpretation of history and the subjects related to architecture, such as modernity, culture and art, evoke more questions about the effective reading of historical chronological layers, and the relative impact of each topic. Is it power, time, specific geography, anthropological factors, or are there specific historical codes that guide the history of humanity? Those issues bring up more challenges to any attempt at reconstruction of Baghdad's history, and bring points of view of historically marginal subjects into the core of interpretation. In order to address these questions, existing modes and theories of history interpretation and representation are discussed in this section.

In his discussion on the interpretation modes of history, Abdul-Malik Al-Tamimi states the most dangerous matter that faces history writing is the partiality in searching for documents to prove prejudgements on some events. He implies this method does not often aim to reach the historical truth but to falsify history¹⁰⁸. Bernard Lewis promotes this viewpoint, and notes “the essential and distinctive feature of scholarly research is, or should be, that it is not directed to pre-determined results”¹⁰⁹. Al-Tamimi points out a phenomenon that is common in historiography of Baghdad: overlooking or ignoring periods in history. In relation to these periods, historical narrations reveal the fact that intimidating influence had imposed this absence, and that such matters are related to self-judgements. He indicates there have been some attempts to search for those absences, but those efforts often skirt around the historical facts and their boundaries¹¹⁰ instead of investigating deeply and inclusively.

So, the limited scope in current methods in historiography that is often mixed with personal motivations can be considered the main cause of historical absences and obscurity. These attitudes confine history to a specific time and create barriers between past, present and future. Felix Korner asserts this by defining interpretation as “the process of transposing other into one's own understanding”¹¹¹. Also Gadamer and Wittgenstein agree “we inherit particular parameters of interpretation, or a particular background, through the history of the society and culture we belong to”¹¹². In fact, personal viewpoint is a typical practice that accompanies any attempt to write history, as the writer automatically develops ideas under the effects and circumstances of his time, which in turn control his writing mode significantly.

These arguments raise questions about the task of the historian, whether he/she can become a judge; is he/she able to start with a preconceived idea or should he/she initiate ideas from the historical affairs? There is no doubt that scholarly writings of the past can be transmitted and understood in the same way as those written by the historian. Yet historians have the right to

¹⁰⁷ Gadamer, *Literature and philosophy in dialogue*, p. 153.

¹⁰⁸ Al-Tamimi, AM, ‘Al-Mawtho’iyya wa Al-Thatiyya fil kitaba Al-Tareekhiyya Al-Mu’asera (Arabic), *A’lam Al-Fikr*, vol. 29, no. 4, viewed 3 January 2013, <<http://annabaa.org/nba58/hasad.htm>>.

¹⁰⁹ Lewis, *History: remembered, recovered, invented*, p. 54.

¹¹⁰ Al-Tamimi, ‘Al-Mawtho’iyya wa Al-Thatiyya fil kitaba Al-Tareekhiyya Al-Mu’asera’.

¹¹¹ Korner, *Revisionist Koran hermeneutics in contemporary Turkish university theology*, p. 22.

¹¹² Arnszald, U, Gadamer, H-G, Malpas, J & Kertscher, J 2002, *Gadamer's century: essays in honor of Hans-Georg Gadamer*, MIT Press, Cambridge, London, p. 35.

choose important ideas and interpret them independently without compromising the writing of history¹¹³. Anthony Vidler asserts “the past was received as a book of possibilities to select or reject”¹¹⁴. Because history is the science of the changeable, historical writings cannot impose or emphasise a specific theory for interpretation, such as substantial, ideological, or social theories. Gadamer emphasises the role of self-judgements and indicates “the methodology of interpretation requires a judgement which cannot again be secured by rules”¹¹⁵. Those complicated facts assert the necessity to learn about different techniques in historiography, and to search for another method that is more flexible and not driven by matters of place or time.

The inquiry into unconventional methodologies in historiography is complex. The main criterion of current historical studies is to utilise sources outside the discipline of architecture to search for unconventional methods of architectural history representation. The aim is to remain within the language of architecture, but speak of it differently. Because of the strong connection of this kind of research to the original formation and the meaning of things, the process of investigating alternative methods to solve historiographical problems is always associated with the concepts of truth, knowledge, and understanding. Schinckel notes, the way people think about reality has implications for the way they think about knowledge and truth. “Ontology and epistemology are not philosophical islands, completely isolated, exerting no influence upon each other. On the contrary: epistemology and ontology support one another”¹¹⁶. The theory of knowledge plays a great role in this investigation, since knowledge is the preliminary source of philosophical advance toward establishing a solid understanding of all phenomenon’s in this world.

The main contemporary theories in historiography are discussed and analysed in this section, in order to establish the criteria for potential methodologies to institute the alternative method for this research study. The key concept of current discourse in historiography research is the so-called ‘historical understanding’. Edward Said explains this concept as “to identify a beginning, particularly that of a historical movement or a realm of thought”¹¹⁷. The two main distinctive cores of current Eurocentric suggestions in historiography are affiliated with two conflicting schools of thought; empirical or semi-empirical and speculative or theoretical schools. Mitchell Dean illustrates the line of division between the two philosophical reflections as “one grounded on experience, meaning and the subject, the other on knowledge, rationality and the concept”¹¹⁸. The moral or conceptual method still secures a position in the contemporary arguments, though it is classified as the classical method. This differentiation focuses on time as a barrier to advancement, and recognises this method as an ancient one that turned the model cities of the ancient thinker into “unfinished projects for anxious souls and weary imaginations”¹¹⁹.

Because of their strong influence on historiography today, it is important to elucidate key existing ideologies in the search for an alternative method. The empirical approach usually privileges analytical sophistication over theoretical system, and plural and diverse intellectual

¹¹³ Al-Tamimi, ‘Al-Mawtho’iyya wa Al-Thatiyya fil kitaba Al-Tareekhiyya Al-Mu’asera’.

¹¹⁴ Akcan, ‘Histories of the immediate present’, pp. 89-90.

¹¹⁵ Korner, *Revisionist Koran hermeneutics in contemporary Turkish university theology*, p. 25.

¹¹⁶ Schinckel, A 2004, ‘History and historiography in process’, in *History and Theory*, vol. 43, pp. 39-56.

¹¹⁷ Said, *Beginnings*, p. 32.

¹¹⁸ Dean, M 1994, *Critical and effective histories: Foucault’s methods and historical sociology*, Routledge, London, New York, p. 30.

¹¹⁹ Khudayyir, M 2008, *Basrayatha: the story of a city*, Verso, London; New York, p. 173.

adventures over the search for foundations. According to this thought, signification occurs when all representations are interconnected as signs, and the complete network of signs is linked together and articulated according to patterns proper to meaning. The group of signs will constitute the image of things. Foucault proposes that signs are not the origin or location of meaning. In this context, Mitchell refers to the transformations of the eighteenth century and the role of the realm of order, of what signified, as a “new realm of authority, of the certainty of political power”¹²⁰. He points out that the great teaching mosques in the Islamic world “were centres not of education, or even learning per se, but of the art and authority of writing”¹²¹. However, that ‘disorder’ seems about to prevail, whenever the old uncoordinated, undistributed style of learning was described¹²². He highlights that this language presented a paradox and well represented the working of colonial authority¹²³.

Foucault identifies ‘power’ as a “complex arrangement [of] forces in society”¹²⁴ and not an individual capacity. He also outlines the question of freedom; “subjects are not only made, we make ourselves”¹²⁵. For Foucault, people can freely create themselves as ethical subjects and this free ethical self-transformation through self-techniques relates to free spiritual self-transformation not only in secular contexts, but in religious ones as well¹²⁶. In addition, he defines what is called ‘political spirituality’ as “the will to discover a different way of governing oneself through a different way of dividing up true and false”¹²⁷. These definitions make the city “a collection of spaces that share relationships and contradictory characteristics with other spaces that reflect the original spaces and that perform dissimilar functions”¹²⁸. In this situation, cities become “nothing but repeated examples of a single, dialectical prototype”¹²⁹. Although the relationships between the historical layers of the city are important, they cannot operate as the main sources for the city’s history, because overlooking other values omits the identity of cities, and does not provide an integrated approach to historiography.

The second school of thought attempts an investigation of truth through the examination of text, self-reflection, and historical consciousness. I will discuss Gadamerian thought among the popular theories that belong to this school. Among the dominant themes of Gadamer’s philosophy is the profound focus on hermeneutics, which he identifies as “the task of bringing people to a self-understanding of themselves”¹³⁰. Felix Korner defines hermeneutics generally as “the theory and art of interpretation”¹³¹. Gadamer’s hermeneutics are associated with three main ideas; understanding, dialogue, and language. Those concepts are always linked to the subjectivity of the human being, and thus “cannot lead to objective knowledge in an epistemic sense”¹³².

¹²⁰ Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*, p.179.

¹²¹ Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*, p.82.

¹²² Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*, p.80.

¹²³ Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*, p.159.

¹²⁴ Taylor, D (ed.) 2011, *Michel Foucault: key concepts*, Acumen, Durham, p. 21.

¹²⁵ Taylor, *Michel Foucault*, p. 7.

¹²⁶ Taylor, *Michel Foucault*, pp. 104-107.

¹²⁷ Taylor, *Michel Foucault*, p. 106.

¹²⁸ Khudayyir, *Basrayatha*, p. 174.

¹²⁹ Khudayyir, *Basrayatha*, p. 172.

¹³⁰ Gadamer, *Reason in the age of science*, p. 149.

¹³¹ Korner, *Revisionist Koran hermeneutics in contemporary Turkish university theology*, p. 23.

¹³² Arnswald, ‘On the certainty of uncertainty’, p. 35.

According to Arnswald, Gadamer's rejection of objective knowledge comes from his deep belief in the importance of culture within our lives as an "ever new source for creativity, inspiration, and innovation"¹³³. Gadamer focuses on the unique criteria of '*Bildung*' as a genuine historical idea that became extremely important in the human sciences¹³⁴. Hermeneutics, outlines Gadamer, has strong connections with history, as it contains "the history-embracing and history-preserving element"¹³⁵ which is in sharp contrast to sociological notions' interest in reflection "as basically a means of emancipation from authority and tradition"¹³⁶. He points out the predetermined attitudes in history, stating that an understanding without prejudices "is the unattainable goal of the Enlightenment"¹³⁷. Thus, he views hermeneutics as a tool that helps to "see through the dogmatism of asserting an opposition and separation between the ongoing natural tradition and the reflective appropriation of it"¹³⁸.

Korner suggests that the Bible could have been the starting point of Gadamer's reflections, and Gadamer's hermeneutics have strong links to the Biblical-Christian and also Jewish concept of revelation¹³⁹. In addition, Gadamer's philosophy is also related to Greek philosophy, specifically the concepts of reflexivity¹⁴⁰. Nonetheless, Joel Weinsheimer states that Gadamer approaches the subject from a secular way: "it bears on his life's project of conceptualising understanding generally"¹⁴¹. Gadamer describes understanding as a superior experience that enables us easily to see through the illusion of the historical method, and that understanding must be consciously created by an unambiguous mediation. For him, understanding occurs when the horizon of the interpreter meets with that of the object¹⁴². As part of his hermeneutical teachings, Gadamer focuses on the double roles of both individuals and the state; since the particular thing is just as much verified by the whole as is the whole by the many particulars¹⁴³. In addition, he considers "reconstructing the condition in which a work passed down to us from the past"¹⁴⁴, as an important aid to understanding.

In addition, Gadamer focuses on language as a crucial element of expression that makes linguistic meaning a central part of social life: "The consciousness that is affected by history has its fulfilment in what is linguistic"¹⁴⁵. He proposes that the phenomena of understanding and misunderstanding, which evidently constitute the fundamental focus of hermeneutics, involve language¹⁴⁶, and that "the fluctuation of word meanings is gradually stabilised in the process of using them"¹⁴⁷. He believes that language can constantly build up and bear within itself the commonality of orientation to the world, and that emerges through the shared interpretation of the world that makes moral and social harmony possible¹⁴⁸. Arnswald notes

¹³³ Arnswald, 'On the certainty of uncertainty', p. 36.

¹³⁴ Gadamer, *Truth and method*, p. 12.

¹³⁵ Gadamer, *Philosophical hermeneutics*, p. 21.

¹³⁶ Gadamer, *Philosophical hermeneutics*, p. 21.

¹³⁷ Morkoc, *A study of Ottoman narratives on architecture*, p. 14.

¹³⁸ Gadamer, *Philosophical hermeneutics*, p. 28.

¹³⁹ Korner, *Revisionist Koran hermeneutics in contemporary Turkish university theology*, p. 121.

¹⁴⁰ See Gadamer, H-G 2000, 'Subjectivity and inter-subjectivity, subject and person', in *Continental philosophy review*, no. 33, pp. 275-287.

¹⁴¹ Gadamer, *Hermeneutics, religion, and ethics*, p. viii.

¹⁴² Morkoc, 'Reading architecture from the text', p. 36.

¹⁴³ Gadamer, *Reason in the age of science*, p. 163.

¹⁴⁴ Gadamer, *Truth and method*, 167.

¹⁴⁵ Gadamer, *Philosophical hermeneutics*, p. 13.

¹⁴⁶ Gadamer, 'Language and understanding (1970)', p. 13.

¹⁴⁷ Gadamer, 'Language and understanding (1970)', p. 25.

¹⁴⁸ Gadamer, 'Language and understanding (1970)', p. 17.

that Gadamerian focus on language outlines the problem of understanding the other and of coming to an appreciation of the other's form of life. This understanding "comes to centre on the problem of understanding other's use of language"¹⁴⁹.

Gadamer looks at the topic of experience from a linguistic perspective. Experiencing "is a language-influenced process, and therefore, finding the adequate wording is part of our experience"¹⁵⁰. He considers language and its articulation as the means to indirectly shape our immediate environment or the social realm¹⁵¹. He focuses on the individual's historical experience saying "true experience is that of one's own historicity"¹⁵², and he believes historical scepticism is "far better supported by experience than by faith in historical necessity and in reason in history"¹⁵³. Morkoc suggests the Gadamerian view of experience opens the way for freedom of human thinking. Hence "human beings become aware of their limits of power, of their finiteness, through experience"¹⁵⁴.

For Gadamer, the city or the *polis* is a mode of being and a "dimension of things that we share and to which we belong"¹⁵⁵. Accordingly, our actions are 'situated within' the horizon of the *polis* or the supra-individual being¹⁵⁶. Thus, "our choice of what needs to be done spreads out into the whole of our external social being"¹⁵⁷. Morkoc views the Gadamerian proposal as an engagement with human sciences, which is crucial for reconceptualising methodological issues in relation to studies of art, architecture and history¹⁵⁸. She states that hermeneutical perspective shifts away from the principles of metaphysics that associate the 'classic' interpretation with history, since Gadamer argues "the moment of creation is only one of the moments of reception in the long career of a building"¹⁵⁹. To resolve the issues of metaphysics, Gadamer suggests embracing philosophy as a means to mediate between the tradition of metaphysics and the modern sciences, and taking responsibility of "making compatible what is incompatible"¹⁶⁰.

These remarks show how the concepts are produced to solve current issues and to fit some contemporary thoughts, which establishes that they cannot be dealt with as constant historical standpoints. Although connecting history to humanity is a clever idea to convey awareness of the inherited social norms, the intense focus on the appropriation between science and tradition establishes a sense of temporality, which is determined to solve a transitory problem of history and evolves as a reactive idea to the undesired principles of classical readings. In addition, the attempt of hermeneutics, as highlighted by Weinsheimer, to yield to the humanist tendency "to reduce the Divine to the human"¹⁶¹ is a huge impairment to the historical interpretation.

¹⁴⁹ Arnsward, 'On the certainty of uncertainty', p. 29.

¹⁵⁰ Arnsward, 'On the certainty of uncertainty', p. 36.

¹⁵¹ Arnsward, 'On the certainty of uncertainty', p. 37.

¹⁵² Gadamer, *Truth and method*, p. 321.

¹⁵³ Gadamer, *Reason in the age of science*, p. 8.

¹⁵⁴ Morkoc, 'Reading architecture from the text', p. 12.

¹⁵⁵ Gadamer, *Hermeneutics, religion, and ethics*, p. ix.

¹⁵⁶ Gadamer, *Hermeneutics, religion, and ethics*, p. x.

¹⁵⁷ Gadamer, *Hermeneutics, religion, and ethics*, p. ix.

¹⁵⁸ Morkoc, 'Reading architecture from the text', p. 15.

¹⁵⁹ Morkoc, *A study of Ottoman narratives on architecture*, p. 17.

¹⁶⁰ Gadamer, 'Subjectivity and intersubjectivity', p. 278.

¹⁶¹ Gadamer, *Hermeneutics, religion, and ethics* (translator introduction), p. viii.

The Gadamerian emphasis on hermeneutical dialogue as an important tool to come to an understanding with the other is described by Arnswald as a good perspective to conquer the challenges of the twenty first century: “to overcome cultural differences and to accept and appreciate other forms of life as an enrichment to our own lives in a world of globalization”¹⁶². Gadamer’s promotion of theory over science is one of the inconsistent matters of this scheme. He considers theory as “a notion instrumental to the investigation of truth and the garnering of new pieces of knowledge”¹⁶³. He also notes science is no longer the embodiment of knowledge and of what is worth knowing, but “a way of advancing and penetrating into unexplored and un-mastered realms”¹⁶⁴.

It is true promoting scientific methods only will not provide a full understanding of history, yet there are interlocking criteria in the inner essences of both fields: science and theory. These aspects, if considered collectively, will set aside all separational aspects, and will add significantly to the historical research. The extreme focus on self-consciousness and the momentary solutions of these assumptions make this theory unsuitable for full implementation in the search for alternative method to Baghdad’s historiography. However, it is productive for this search, since it emphasises the relationship between history and literary criticism.

2.4 An Alternative Method

“The investigation of truth is in one sense difficult, in another easy. A sign of this is the fact that neither can one reach it adequately, nor do all fail, but each says something about the nature of things, and while each of us contributes nothing or little to the truth, a considerable amount of it results from all our contributions.”¹⁶⁵

In this chapter, the search for an alternative method in historiography began with a demonstration of the theories and hypotheses proposed by current scholars to solve the problem of historiography. These theories are different and sometimes contradictory, yet their overall outcomes add significantly to the historical understanding, and contribute to this kind of research. However, these methods cannot be fully implemented for the representation of Baghdad’s history, for two reasons. First, those philosophies are normally unilateral in their aims and objectives. Historiographical methods that constrict historical experience in the boundaries of one dominant element, and in a specific occasion of history, abolish and invalidate other elements of the historical experience. Consequently, the result is a unilateral incomplete interpretation.

Second, these methodologies are usually linked to a specific locale and particular problems, which necessitates more flexibility and openness to understand other important efforts in the historical research extent. Frank proposes a solution to the problem of Eurocentric historiography. He argues if received social theory is unsatisfactory because it is based on Eurocentric historiography, then it is logical to start by conducting better non-Eurocentric historiographical studies, yet this needs an improved perspective or theory. He suggests a global theory to solve the problem: “only a holistic universal, global, world history, as it

¹⁶² Arnswald, ‘On the certainty of uncertainty’, p. 34.

¹⁶³ Gadamer, *Reason in the age of science*, p. 69.

¹⁶⁴ Gadamer, *Reason in the age of science*, p. 69.

¹⁶⁵ Smith, Allhoff & Vaidya (eds.), *Ancient philosophy*, p. 252.

really was, can offer the historiographical basis for a better social theory”¹⁶⁶. However, earlier discussion highlighted some concepts relevant to this search, and therefore some of these concepts are taken into consideration. In fact, the Gadamerian method that comprises intangible elements in the interpretation process, and focuses on literature and art in historical representation provides fruitful ideas to this search.

The key motivation for the alternative method is to seek a ‘third space’ that is neither empirical nor speculative, but rather a combination, a refinement of existing theories, and an accumulation of extra ideas and concepts. I call the new method *infinite interlocking interpretation*. This method views history as one whole entity that has a twofold influence on all other disciplines, including science, geography, philosophy, literature, architecture and arts. The method signifies the interlocking elements between these subjects, and between different existing theories in historiography. The motive for this integration is in the historical nature of things that are always integrated, or have integrative elements embedded in them, even if they appear totally different. I believe that this vision of integration and unity, instead of separation and isolation, enables the researcher to develop an unconventional picture of history, and promotes the understanding of historical events and fill the gaps in historiography. In addition, this method views time as a whole unit, and observes the intermingling conditions of humans’ history as a positive element to achieve progress.

The new method promotes a higher level of understanding the compound elements of the city. Nasar points out to these elements, as he borrows Rapoport’s notion of the levels of conception to meaning. He proposes meaning possesses three levels: lower level or denotative meaning which applies to the recognition of physical appearance, and middle level or connotative meaning which applies to the feelings and emotions. The third level is the higher level of understanding which refers less to the object than to broader values¹⁶⁷. Accordingly, interpretation that relies on the physical appearance provides a lower level of meaning, and the study of other related disciplines provides the middle level. The integration between both sources establishes a meaningful image and represents the high level of meaning.

The alternative method aims to maintain diverse intellectual adventure, which seems to be a wide historical reference¹⁶⁸. To investigate more elements to aid the understanding of history, the new method implements techniques from the Gadamerian hypothesis. Gadamer employs principles such as dialogue, experience and induction to emphasise significant elements of historical understanding and provide knowledge about the historical experience of humanity. I believe that through dialogue with the object, historical meanings are revealed, and this promotes more understanding about the historical experience. The type of dialogue implemented in this thesis is the interrogation of poetry and historical narratives of the eighteenth and nineteenth century Baghdad.

The key principle of the alternative method is to be more open and flexible to encompass all aspects of the historical movement, and benefit from current theories, without eliminating the original teachings that are not established on narrow self-interests or temporary needs. The focus on the relations between the objects or on the self-awareness of those objects would not

¹⁶⁶ Frank, AG 1998, *ReOrient: global economy in the Asian Age*, University of California Press, Berkeley, p. 340.

¹⁶⁷ Nasar J, 1998, *The evaluative image of the city*, Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, CA, pp. 6-7. Also see Rapoport A. 1990, *The meaning of the built environment: a non-verbal communication approach*.

¹⁶⁸ Frank, *ReOrient*, p. 1.

solve historiographical problem, unless the alternative theory is informed by other elements beyond the physical settings, in which values constitute the basis for their advancement, integration and continuity. In this way, the new method considers commonality a supporting principle to promote the integration with the past and prevents its separation. Gadamer suggests “through talking things out with each other to the fullest possible extent we will overcome being blocked off from insight by remaining stuck within the compass of our opinions”¹⁶⁹.

Another principle highlighted by Al-Sadr and Khalil to promote the understanding of history is ‘historical laws’. These laws are set by the Divine power but are dependent on both human’s will and ethics. Al-Sadr cites an example from the Qur’an which sets the historical law of the substitution of the rise and decline in the societies. He notes there are specific conditions that can determine this rise or decline depending on people, as terrible conditions would not change unless people contribute to changing them, and if people are willing to advance and change their lives positively, they are supported by the Divine supremacy¹⁷⁰. However, in these conditions, faith may not remove human’s trials, but it provides God’s strength to overcome them. In general, people own two types of relations, a relation with natural resources, and a relation with other human beings who share the rights to benefit from those resources. The state is a social phenomenon in human life. The goal of maintaining continuity of such state is dependent on developing a social organisation based on justice and truth, in order to maintain the unity of humanity, and extend its growth to the right direction. This attitude is understood but it is absent in current historiography theories, because it is considered ‘the goal of the ancient thinker’¹⁷¹.

The issue of the religious connections of the city touches the historical reality of Baghdad in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, due to the enormous transformations based on secular perspectives. Thus, it is important to discuss the matter thoroughly and introduce some evidence of this thought. Throughout its history, Baghdad was among the greatest centres of learning. People from everywhere immigrated to Baghdad to study at universities like Madrasa Mustansiriyya and Madrasa Al-Nidhamiyya. Although different subjects were taught in these schools (such as medicine, maths, astronomy, history and literature) religious teachings regularly accompany any study. These schools and universities were part of a great learning system, and students often lived inside the school and were well paid. The description of Al-Ghazali (1058-1111) who stayed in Baghdad in the Madrasa Al-Nidhamiyya in the twelfth century, establishes a clear picture of this situation. He notes “the wealth of Iraq was available for good works, since it constitutes a trust fund for the benefit of Muslims. Nowhere in the world have I seen better financial arrangements to assist a scholar to provide for his children”¹⁷².

In the first half of the nineteenth century, Al-Duri states, “there was a conspicuous feeling for the pre-eminence of Islam and its values, accompanied by administration of the Western superiority in science and industry”¹⁷³, and this was the attitude of the early supporters of

¹⁶⁹ Gadamer, ‘Language and understanding (1970)’, p. 17.

¹⁷⁰ Shamsuddin, MJ (ed.) 1989, *Al-Sunan Al-Tarekhiyya fil Qur’an by Mohammed Baqer Al-Sadr* (Arabic), Dar Al-Ta’aruf lil matbo’aat, Beirut, p. 49. In this account Al-Sadr refers to chapter 2 verse 140, and also to chapter 13 verse 11 of the Qur’an.

¹⁷¹ Khudayyir, *Basrayatha*, p. 172.

¹⁷² Kritzeck, *Anthology of Islamic literature*, p. 190.

¹⁷³ Al-Duri, AA 1987, *The historical formation of the Arab nation: a study in identity and consciousness*, Croom Helm, London, pp. 153-154.

reform. Al-Duri mentions the report that was submitted in 1846, which did not propose the abolition of Islamic schools, but rather suggested the parallel establishment of a ‘modern’ educational system¹⁷⁴. The new schools, he notes, resulted in the creation of another class in society that comprised the graduates of those schools¹⁷⁵. The establishment of these schools alongside the traditional ones “led to a dualism in education and in thought, which had its own far-reaching impact on cultural development”¹⁷⁶.

These remarks suggest that the transformations of the nineteenth century did not affect the learning system alone, but affected the whole society. Instead of advancing the city and the society, these changes contributed to the deterioration of many disciplines, including architecture. They also reveal another historical rule that the gradual weakening of the city was due to a deviation from the religious guidance¹⁷⁷. So, the advantage of implementing the ‘historical laws’ approach is to learn from human experiences and intelligence, and at the same time take lessons from the Qur’an, which provides realistic unexaggerated examples, and unites the history movement to a universal unit by removing all the obstacles that separate time¹⁷⁸. This promotes a strong base for the new approach, since “every work that is not established on a strong base would not last long”¹⁷⁹.

The basic incentive for the new method in this thesis is to discover the goal of the conscious movement of historical achievement that is significant in architecture and in art; the “representative of higher truth”¹⁸⁰. The method does not interfere with existing architectural science, but it is instead concerned with architectural doctrine. This method interprets architecture through the reading of different texts, since “texts not only mirror their time but also project a world of their own”¹⁸¹. This textual representation method is regarded as an important historical tool that has been implemented by scholars of discursive humanitarian thought for decades. In order to promote a range of explorations that could enrich the understanding of architectural imagination, the alternative method utilises a combination of both conventional systematic schemes and discursive systems. This process shifts the focus “from the unchanging essentiality of form, style and aesthetics onto the multiple and changing concepts of self and place that arise in cross-cultural encounters”¹⁸². These systems include literature, arts, history, comparative philosophy and psychology. Said identifies these concepts as self-definition sources¹⁸³. However, textual representation in this thesis examines only literature and poetry because of the limited capacity of the research. The examination of literature and poetry is one of the powerful aspects of the new method as the implications of historical changes clearly show in their textual differences.

The *infinite interlocking interpretation* in this thesis does not confine textual representation to the literary interpretation of text, and the peripheral meaning of words. It proposes a complex

¹⁷⁴ Al-Duri, *The historical formation of the Arab nation*, p. 144.

¹⁷⁵ Al-Duri, *The historical formation of the Arab nation*, p. 144.

¹⁷⁶ Al-Duri, *The historical formation of the Arab nation*, p. 145. The dualism in education is also mentioned by Lassner, *The topography of Baghdad in the early Middle Ages*, p. 142.

¹⁷⁷ This historical law is in many verses of the Qur’an, such as chapter 72 verse 16, chapter 16 verse 112, and chapter 16 verse 97.

¹⁷⁸ Khalil, *Al-Tafseer Al-Islami lil-Tarekh* (Arabic), p. 14.

¹⁷⁹ Bacon, EN 1967, *Design of cities*, Thames and Hudson, London, p. 77.

¹⁸⁰ Passmore, J & Australian Academy of the Humanities 1975, *Art science and imagination*, Sydney University Press, Sydney, p.14.

¹⁸¹ Morkoc, *A study of Ottoman narratives on architecture*, p. 18. This statement was quoted from Paul Ricoeur.

¹⁸² Akkach, Fung & Scriver (eds.), *Self, place & imagination*, p v.

¹⁸³ Said, *Beginnings*, p. 300.

method of interrogation instead. The interlocking aspect is applied to the history of the terms, which implies that terms that are implemented in this method in relation to crucial variables, such as social and cultural variables, should be understandable, and as explicit as possible. These terms should not be instructive, so they promote a different understanding of the urban experience, and call for reflections on space and architecture, and different ways of historical writing that are not eminent acts of politics. As implied by 'interlocking' the process of questioning Baghdadi poetry and narratives of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries encompasses 'horizontal meaning'. This meaning relates to understanding individual words, their use and history, in addition to the vertical meaning that relates to the meaning of the whole text and the relations between all its parts. Further, the process examines the literature of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as a part of the integrated history of Baghdad, and does not deal with it as a separate phase. Therefore, literature and poetry from other periods are also examined, since they belong to this unified history.

The alternative method opens out to three main dynamics, advancement, balance and complete vision. Advancement refers to the search for another understanding of history that promotes a continuous improvement of the society by endorsing the infinite goal of progression, and using available resources in an innovative way to prevent unfair distribution. The method looks at history as a science and does not deal with it emotionally, since examining history should always be directed at achieving the goals of continuous advancement of the society. The positive advancement in history that recognises past, present, and future, and follows definite values, is a vital element in history; it urges people to work and support the appeal for a new building process, and it introduces a realistic and clear example for this process, which keeps urging people to contribute to it.

The second dynamic 'balance' applies to the stability in dealing with singular and plural issues, and avoiding separation from the Divine inspirations. This approach acknowledges the interconnecting aspects of spiritual, speculative and experimental philosophies; it does not exclude scientific aspects, but it highlights artistic conceptions and combines them with science. The implementation of the concept of balance in architectural and urban history requires equitable visions of the benefits of modernity, historical inheritance, and future progression in a way that is harmonious and compatible with human nature and needs. In fact, balance is among the most influential historical laws that are crucial to people's lives. If societies disregard balance in dealing with different historical issues, and misplace their resources, they will lose them eventually. In relation to Baghdad's urban history, these issues of imbalance caused the ruin and deterioration of Baghdad in the eleventh century, when luxurious life resulted in an enormous waste of natural and human resources.

The third dynamic, 'complete vision' indicates the consideration of all aspects of the historical experience, and the prevention of favouring one element over others. It also avoids the transformation of relative and limited goals to an absolute goal, which impedes the stability of the society's positive advancement and growth. The long march in history towards ultimate goals proved the incapacity of such goals to achieve progression and development. Conversely, remote and inaccessible goals guarantee the continuous development of the society; when people feel close to reach that goal they discover new strategies and developments that make the fuel more glowing and the movement more active and the development more innovative. Therefore, the complete vision approach ensures constant continuity and progress in history. The most important factor that urges people to work and support the appeal for a new building process, is that this appeal should provide a realistic and clear example for the building process, and keeps urging them to accomplish positive and

continuous contributions. Moreover, this technique shows time as a positive element that promotes more advancement to historical understanding, rather than being a barrier to the interpretation process. Time is viewed as a continuous matter in history that should not affect values. Thus, all values cannot be adjusted with time, however, to promote constant progress of the society, fixed values may be maintained, and the changeable values may be adjusted.

In summary, the main component of the suggested method is the continuous interlocking criteria that necessitate interlocking different philosophies, interconnecting various phases of history, and unifying the interpretation of history. Regarding the representation and depiction of architectural and urban history, the method advocates linking architecture to other disciplines to enable more understanding of architectural past and present situations. To achieve this goal, the method implements the three dynamics; advancement, balance, and complete vision. In relation to the interpretation of texts, the method reads the text as a whole to extract impressions and represent knowledge, rather than interpreting it literally and partially.

In the following five chapters I will apply the alternative method to the historiography of Baghdad. This application is achieved in several stages, starting with critical approaches to the conventional historiography of Baghdad in Chapter Three, moving to a textual representation of different texts in Chapters Four, Five and Six. In Chapter Seven, the outcomes of these explorations are examined utilising comparative analyses between conventional methods and the alternative method, and between the various references that are investigated in this thesis, including poetry, historical narratives and travelogues. The aim is to verify the credibility of these texts as valid historical references, and to assert the significance of the alternative method that adds to and complements the conventional methods.

3 Critical Study of the Conventional Historiography of Baghdad

The alternative method in this thesis suggests a consideration of conventional methods as one measure of the new method. Accordingly, conventional methods are examined in this chapter to discover the different techniques, and to recognise the absences in the historiography of Baghdad. The focus of this investigation is on a critical analysis of these methods rather than demonstrating the history of Baghdad. However, it is important to elaborate some historical events of Baghdad, such as its foundation, its urban development and its situation in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. I believe the critical analysis of the conventional historiography of Baghdad; in addition to the understanding of specific historical affairs, assist each other to locate the gaps generated in the conventional historiography. Although this chapter focuses on the architectural and urban history of Baghdad in particular, it also examines the city's history in general. This approach contributes to the success of the dynamics of the alternative method; advancement, balance, and complete vision. Hence, the alternative method interacts with conventional methods, and architecture is interconnected with other disciplines.

3.1 Historiography, Urban History and the Foundation of Baghdad

“Only a traveller ignorant of the Arabic literary tradition could place Baghdad on equal footing with other towns on his itinerary”¹

Baghdad is an old city with an aged urban history. It is the second largest city in the Arab world after Cairo. This city has an intimate relationship with the Tigris River, which provides beauty, fertility, and utility for the city (Figure 4). This river runs through the city, creating a beautiful environment, and granting the surrounding area with a happy and enduring reality². Throughout history, Baghdad witnessed many catastrophes and did not experience constant stability, which resulted in a continuous loss of the original historical materials. Accordingly, the city's historiography became a common ground for historical myths and mysteries. Its long erratic history and the supremacy of its first planned city that have been interminably celebrated in historiography are some of the aspects of its historical significance.

¹ Cooperson, 'Baghdad in rhetoric and narrative', pp. 99-113.

² Makkiyya, M 2005, *Baghdad*, 1st edn, Al-Warrak Publishing Ltd, London, p. 282.

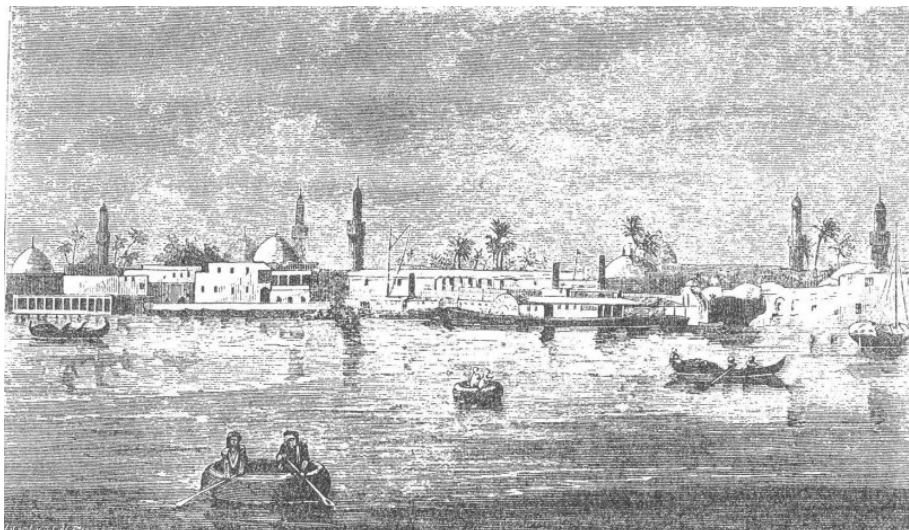


Figure 4: The life of the river [Fogg 1985]

The study of the urban history of Baghdad embraces an increasing interest in current historical studies. Ra'of suggests that historians are interested to learn about Baghdad's history because it is the hub of the largest part of human activities of a particular civilization, which makes the history of the city a representative of human history in general³. On the other hand, Lassner considers Baghdad "a city of no particular dimension, because it was a city of all dimensions, with life focusing on every aspect of human endeavour"⁴. There is no doubt that the history of Baghdad is a significant case in historiography, yet it appears that the exaggeration of the historical texts of the Abbasids' period contributed to this chronological desirability.

Although this study is dedicated to re-reading the urban history of Baghdad in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, it is important to highlight the first moments of the city's foundation, and the different stages of its history, to promote an understanding of its history in general. The analysis of the origins of the city brings up various possibilities for the researcher to reconcile material and cultural creation. Historians bring up different interpretations of the word 'Baghdad'. For example, Cooperson links it to a Persian interpretation, as 'bagh' means 'idol' and 'dad' means 'gift'⁵. Yet the meaning of those different names, in general, indicates a fertile city, blessed with greenery and considered as a gift from God⁶. The name 'Baghdad' is used in different historical materials to indicate different sites. While many sources collectively consider the round city that was built by the Abbasids, as the first urban settlement in Baghdad, other studies suggest that there was some kind of settlement in the same site three thousand years prior to the establishment of the round city. The old Babylonian mud stone that was discovered in 1780 with the Aramaic word 'Bagdado' engraved on it supports this suggestion⁷. Also the close proximity of Baghdad to the great

³ Ra'of, IA 2000, *Ma'alem Baghdad fil-quroon Al-Muta'akhira* (Arabic), Baytul-Hikma, Baghdad, Iraq, p.3.

⁴ Lassner, *The topography of Baghdad in the early Middle Ages*, p.17.

⁵ Cooperson, 'Baghdad in rhetoric and narrative', pp. 99-113.

⁶ Jawad, M, Susa, A, Makkiyya, M & Ma'ruf, N 1968, *Baghdad*, Iraqi Engineers Association with Gubenkian Foundation, Baghdad, p. 16.

⁷ Al-Warid, BA 1980, *Hawadeth Baghdad fi 12 qarn*, Al-Dar Al-Arabiyya, Baghdad, p.228.

cities of Babylon, Dur Kurigalzu, Ur and Nineveh, where ancient civilisations emerged confirms its old age.

Together with the central location of Baghdad, the fertile land turned the ancient settlement in the area into a great market village. Lassner notes the unique geographic position of Baghdad “made it at the same time a major inland port and a great centre of overland trade”⁸. Historical sources indicate the market village was known as ‘Suq Baghdad’. This village existed before Islam on the east side of the Tigris River⁹. The name of the village suggests the existence of the marketplace as a dominant activity. The flourishing phase of this village came to an end in the year 144/762, when a nearby site was chosen by the Abbasids’ ruler, Al-Mansour, to be the capital of the Abbasid’s state. Nevertheless, the old settlement regained its significance as a market place a few decades later, when the caliph expelled the markets outside the round city (Figure 5). The market activity kept attracting inhabitants and later businesses, and became the commercial core of Baghdad for centuries to the present day.

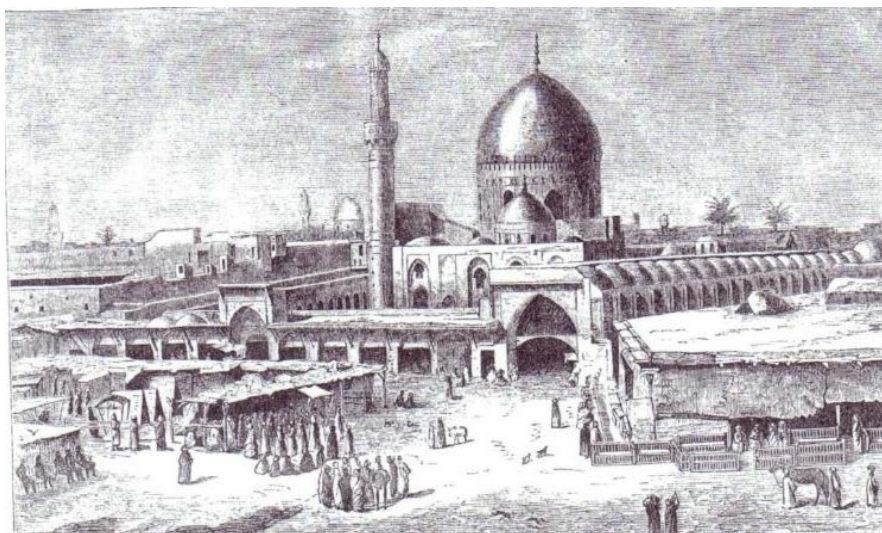


Figure 5: A market-place in Baghdad [Fogg 1985]

The round city settlement carried a number of names at the time of its foundation, including Al-Zawraa’, Madinat Al-Mansour, and Dar Al-Salam (the house of peace), although it also maintained the original name, Baghdad. Later on, this city attained additional names in the historical material such as Baghdad, the round city and the circular city. The circular form is 2300 metres in diameter¹⁰. This city basically constituted a circular centripetal geometric form of double walls that had four double gates and a huge palace in the centre, in addition to the central mosque. The city also comprised four market complexes in the arcades by each gate. Various neighbourhoods were located between the gates, and the caliph’s palace was located in the centre of the city by the central mosque. This settlement was built in the Karkh

⁸ Lassner, *The topography of Baghdad in the early Middle Ages*, p.17.

⁹ Ra’of (ed.) 2004, *Al-Iqd Al-Lami’ bi athar Baghdad wal masajed wal jawame’* by Abdul-Hameed Abadah (Arabic), First edn, Anwar Dijla Publishing, Baghdad, p.20. Also see Jawad, Susa, Makkiyya & Ma’ruf, *Baghdad*. See also Mohammed Ali, IM 2008, *Madinat Baghdad: Al-Ab’aad Al-Ijtimaiyya wa thuroof Al-Nash’ah* (Arabic), Al-Hathariyya liltibaaah wal-nashr, Al-Aref lilmatbu’at, Baghdad.

¹⁰ Grabar, *The formation of Islamic art*, p.68.

sector of Baghdad on the west side of the Tigris River, in an area called now Utaifiyya¹¹. The site was selected at the point where the two great rivers Tigris and Euphrates are close to each other. History tells that this city was built of a very high standard, and it contained the palaces, with neat and wide roads (Figures 6, 7). Historians are overwhelmed by the water supply system, which constituted efficient canals that pass through the quarters and among the dwellings¹².

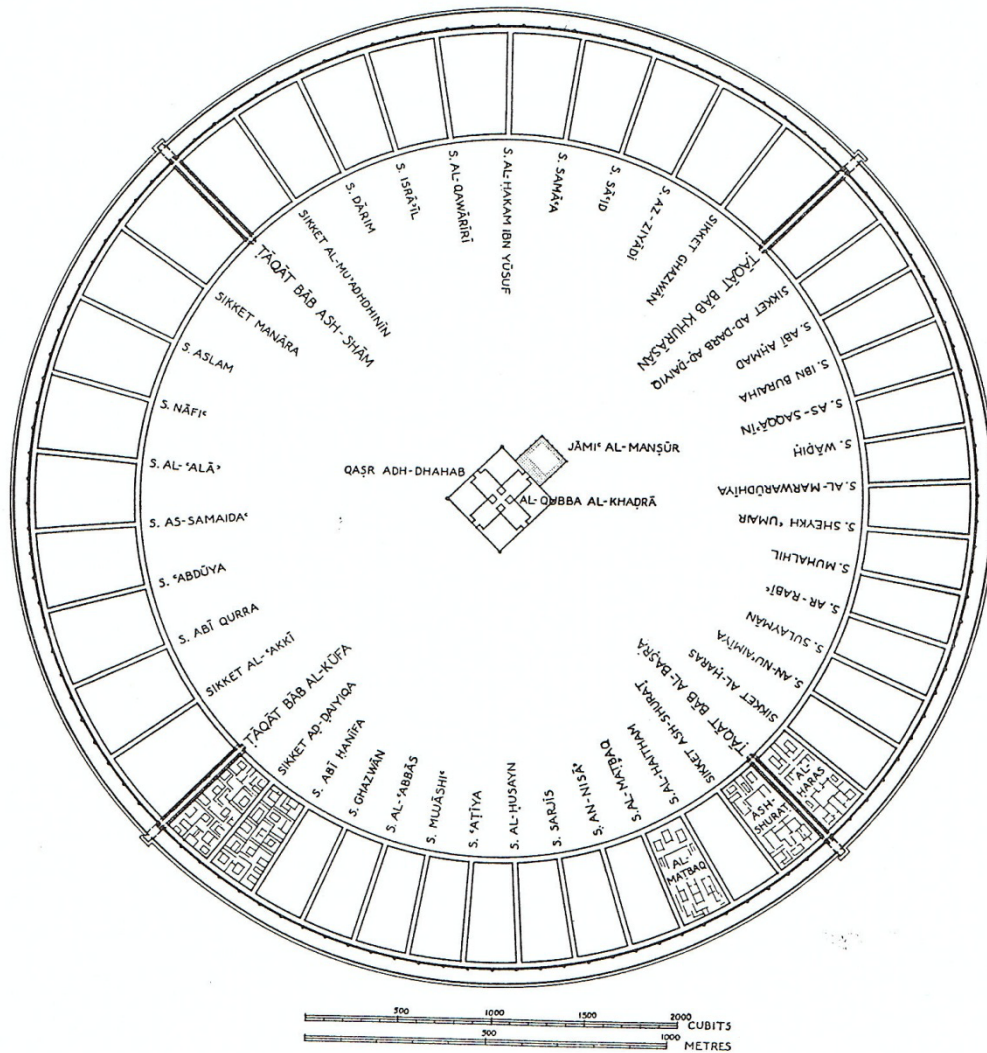


Figure 6: The plan of the round city of Baghdad [Grabar 1987]

¹¹ Ra'of, IA (ed.) 1978, *Tarekh hawadeth Baghdad wal Basrah 1186-1192 AH, 1772-1778 AD* by Abdul-Rahman Al-Suwaidi (Arabic), The Ministry of Education and Arts, Baghdad.

¹² Lassner, *The topography of Baghdad in the early Middle Ages*, p. 100. Also see Ra'of, IA (ed.) 2008(ed.), *Akhbaar Baghdad wa ma jawaraha min albilad* (Arabic) by Mahmud Shukri Al-Alusi, Addar Alarabiyya lilmaawsooat, Beirut, p.58.

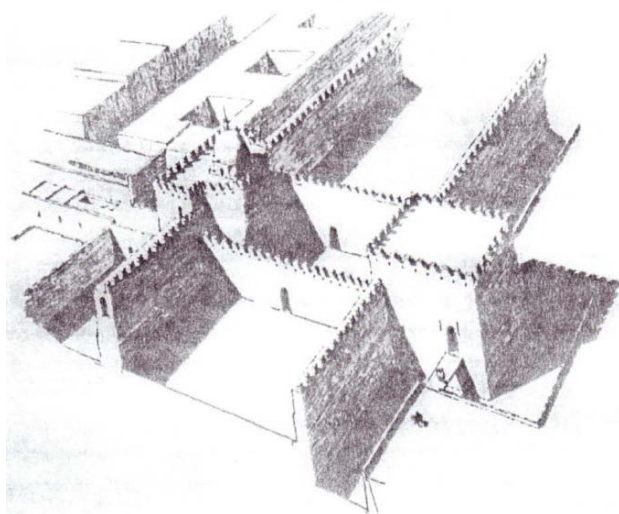


Figure 7: Part of the round city reconstructed [Lassner 1970]

In 149/767 the construction of the round city concluded, and diverse groups of people immigrated to Baghdad at that time. Mohammed Ali notes many people chose to reside in the round city, including merchants, different scholars, artists, craftsmen and all people who sought fame. As a result, Baghdad became an international city associated with different people from many nationalities and colours¹³. However, the affluence of this city as the capital of the Islamic world did not last longer than sixty nine years, when the Abbasids moved their capital from Baghdad north to Samarra in 221/836. However, the city began to expand as new buildings were constructed around the walled area and on the eastern side of the Tigris River “shortly after its completion”¹⁴. Grabar considers Baghdad “the first city expanded so rapidly and transformed itself so completely a few years after its creation”¹⁵. Historians suggest different interpretations for this shift, yet they indicate three main reasons for the relocation: expelling the market activity outside the city, the indirect relation to the river and political conflicts. Historically, the river has been a major part of the urban appeal of the city beside the market activity, so isolating the city from these two important features is among the reasons for the city’s decline.

Historical narrations indicate that the decision of moving the markets outside the city had strong implications on the residential expansion outside the city. Both Lassner and Al-Alusi state that a Byzantine Emperor warned the caliph about foreigners and enemies who may penetrate through the markets, as no one can be denied access to those markets¹⁶. So, the caliph ordered the markets to be moved, since he was concerned about his own security. Other sources suggest that the markets were moved to keep the noise outside the city. Nevertheless, there is no doubt moving the markets evoked opposite movement outside the city, as market activity is among the most prominent and cultivating activities of Baghdad.

¹³ Mohammed-Ali, *Madinat Baghdad* (Arabic), p161.

¹⁴ Lassner, *The topography of Baghdad in the early Middle Ages*, p. 27.

¹⁵ Lassner, *The topography of Baghdad in the early Middle Ages*, p. 15.

¹⁶ Lassner, *The topography of Baghdad in the early Middle Ages*, p. 61.

Another aspect that encouraged the expansion outside the city was its relative remoteness from the waterway, as the city was built away from the river for security reasons. As a result, the suburbs started to grow, gradually shifting over one kilometre southwards from the city's original position and establishing a growing urban settlement (Karkh) that reached out to the eastern bank of the Tigris, generating the district of Rusafa. It is important to note here that the settlement in Rusafa (the eastern part) existed thousands of years before the Karkh settlement, yet it was expanded during that period.

Another reason for the fast decline of the round city was the firm, round shape that resisted expansion. In addition, political decisions like expelling craftsmen and merchants outside the city, and building double layers of fences with military bases and prisons, increased social disaffection to the city. Acting collectively with other factors, continuous floods contributed to the city's fast decline. In the year 278/892 the Abbasids moved the capital back to Baghdad¹⁷. Instead of returning back to the round city, it was Rusafa they selected for their new residence, "abandoning the previous northern settlements and confirming the shift of the urban system which had occurred"¹⁸. The second settlement of the Abbasids in Rusafa comprised the centre of Baghdad's important divisions in the following years until present. The proximity of Rusafa to the eastern trade routes, its location on slightly higher land, and the long existence of markets associated with revered tombs and mosques, may explain the superiority and long existence of Rusafa over Karkh. The Abbasids erected more palaces and bridges, which gained a great deal of attention in literature because of their outstanding features. The lavish and luxurious life that the young caliphs experienced in Baghdad drew their attention away from administration and turned their rule to a "local monarchy"¹⁹.

Historical material indicates both the physical surface of the round city and its institutions were undergoing enormous changes after the decline, and the city vanished completely and did not leave any trace behind²⁰. Despite great excavation efforts the Department of Antiquities in Baghdad could find little trace of it²¹. Consequently, the major source for the round city in historiography continued to be literary. The glory of this city remained the focus of historical literature, particularly Western studies of Islamic art and architecture. Grabar notes "the memory of its original shape and the ideas behind it lasted for centuries in a way that has no parallel in the history of Islamic cities"²². Scholars tried to reconstruct the city maps, reproduce the city digitally and consider it an important part of architectural education. Conversely, the second settlement of the Abbasids in Rusafa, which added to the existing settlement and was not restricted to a geometrical shape, lasted for a long time and continued to be the central hub for successive governments, including Ottomans²³. However, it did not receive a similar interest in the conventional historiography. The imaginary features of the round city of Baghdad attracted historians and an enormous amount of historical literature

¹⁷ See Ra'of, *Akhbaar Baghdad wa ma jawaraha min Al-Bilad* (Arabic), p.58. Also see Selman I et al. 1982, *Al-Imarat Al-Arabiyya Al-Islamiyya fi Al-Iraq* (Arabic), Baghdad, Al-Hurriyya Press.

¹⁸ Bianca, S & Eidgenossische Technische Hochschule Zurich. Institut fur Orts- Regional- und Landesplanung. 2000, *Urban form in the Arab world: past and present*, VDF, Zurich, p. 249.

¹⁹ Fletcher, B & Musgrove, J 1987, *Sir Banister Fletcher's A history of architecture*, 19th edn, Butterworths, London, Boston, p.532.

²⁰ Cooperson, *Baghdad in Rhetoric and Narrative*, pp. 99-113.

²¹ See Ra'of, *Ma'alem Baghdad fil-quroon Al-Muta'akhira*. Also see Cooperson, 'Baghdad in Rhetoric and Narrative'. And see Lassner, *The topography of Baghdad in the early Middle Ages*.

²² Grabar, *The formation of Islamic art*, p.67. Some historical scholarship associates the round shapeto pre-Islamic palace/city design. See Moholy-Nagy, *Matrix of man*. Pp. 55-61.

²³ See Figure 3.

commends the city's attributes and places it as a foremost great urban centre²⁴, and "the best city on earth"²⁵.

Grabar links the reason for the city's exceptional standing in historiography to the city shape that "was transformed through its internal composition into a symbolic and ceremonial palace, while maintaining a sort of token urban element in carefully measured, mapped out, and selectively settled quarters between the forbidding fortified walls and the abode of the caliph"²⁶. In addition, he considers this city illustrates early Islamic monumental activities, and demonstrates the symbolic as well as physical appropriation of land in a particularly unusual style, even though nothing remains of it²⁷. For Grabar, this monumental and emblematic presentation made Baghdad "the navel of the universe, and medieval geographers put Iraq in the central and most favoured clime of the world"²⁸. The superiority of the round city in history shows the major effects of contradictory visions and the impact of the transmission of historical myths on historiography. Cooperson suggests the glories of the Abbasids' Baghdad had instilled a lively appreciation among British observers²⁹. Yet for European historians in general, this city expresses an elaborate establishment more than a simple settlement. The symbolic and colossal criteria associated with the city's attributes corresponded with their imaginations and expectations of Islamic architecture as the architecture of astonishment and power.

The strong admiration of the Abbasids' Baghdad is also expressed in the literature of Baghdadis, but from a different perspective. The sad circumstances that accompanied the long history of Baghdad and the extensive narratives that exaggerate the city's standards during the Abbasids' period (and illustrate a historical Baghdad free of the troubles of their present) turned the city into a nostalgic icon that evokes respect and longing. Al-Alusi explains this tendency stating: "Baghdad was a great city in the Abbasid period. The city was laughing until Hulako made it cry with blood"³⁰. It is important to note that the Baghdad that is described in these texts does not focus on the type of the settlement of Baghdad, yet the texts limit the prosperity of Baghdad to the Abbasids' period. The Abbasids ruled Baghdad for two hundred and three years. The span of their rule in the round city did not exceed sixty nine years, which leaves a longer period of one hundred and thirty four years to the second settlement of Baghdad. In fact, a reading of the literature of the local scholars reveals it is the second settlement of Baghdad which comprised elegant mansions and thriving markets. Baghdad became a great centre of theological study, as well as more general learning, which for centuries attracted many people to live there.

This case can be considered one of the most contradictory in Baghdad's historiography. While local literature emphasises the measures of a thriving city that evoke romantic expressions and increase the will to settle there, these texts combine both areas in this expression, and sometimes the second settlement is mentioned as a subsidiary to the round city. This historiography focuses on time rather than place, since both cities were related to the Abbasid period. Although combining them in literature connected the physical characteristics of the round city with the high learning facilities of the second settlement, it

²⁴ Lassner, *The topography of Baghdad in the early Middle Ages*, p.25.

²⁵ Cooperson, 'Baghdad in rhetoric and narrative', pp. 99-113

²⁶ Grabar, *The formation of Islamic art*, p.71.

²⁷ Grabar, *The formation of Islamic art*, p.69.

²⁸ Grabar, *The formation of Islamic art*, p.71.

²⁹ Cooperson, 'Baghdad in rhetoric and narrative', pp. 99-113

³⁰ Ra'of (ed.), *Akhbaar Baghdad wa ma jawaraha min Al-Bilad*, p. 44.

causes a difficulty in historiography to designate which Baghdad is meant by specific texts. The second Baghdad that grew on the shores of the Tigris River without any planned geometrical form or restriction of movement, gained more affection and attachment until the present time. However, this city received negative judgements in conventional historiography because of the different aims and visions of historians who confined their measures to some imagined physical standards, and considered political situations and physical characteristics the main elements of their observation.

In the year 334/946 the Abbasids' rule came to an end partly, when Persian Buwayds controlled the western side of Baghdad, in addition to a few areas in the eastern part. This intrusion might have been a reflection of the weakness of late Abbasids' caliphs due to their immersion in a luxurious lifestyle. However, in 443/1052 the Turkish Seljuk took over the city³¹. It can be assumed that the beginning of the political tension in Baghdad between the two growing powers in the area (Persians and Turkish) started in this time. The Abbasids took the city back in 582/1187, but in 683/1258 the Moguls controlled it and put a distinct end to the Abbasids' rule. At this point, the historiography of Baghdad starts to take a dramatic turn. Historians mark this year as the year of the 'fall of Baghdad', which draws a sharp end to the earlier prosperous and flourishing life of the city. There is no doubt that the Moguls' invasion caused a lot of damage to the city and its people, yet the terrible consequences of this event were excessive. An example of this exaggeration is the unrelated description of an image of Baghdad (Figure 8). This old drawing portrays the devastating effects of a flood that took place in Baghdad in 757/1356.



Figure 8: A flood in fourteenth century Baghdad [Warren & Fethi 1982]

³¹ For more details about the history of Baghdad refer to Jawad, Susa, Makkiyya & Ma'ruf, *Baghdad* (Arabic). Also refer to Al-Warid, *Hawadeth Baghdad fi 12 qarn*. See also Ra'of (ed.), *Akhbaar Baghdad wa ma jawaraha min Al-Bilad*.

While many references link this image to the flood of the fourteenth century³², Warren and others link it to the Mogul invasion³³. In addition, the date ascribed to it in the British Museum collection is 1468 instead of 1356. However, the poem that is written on the upper part of the image refers to the flood of 1356, which implies there is no link between this image and the Mogul invasion to Baghdad. These circumstances show the effects of transmitted ideas on the writing of history. The poem was originally written in Persian.

In the year 757AH the water destroyed the great city drastically, what a terrible water
Oh Baghdad, the garden of the world, I feel very sorry for you, as the sky did all this damage and ruin to you³⁴

Once again, the historical literature exaggerates the situation of the city, but in a terribly negative manner, contrasting the extremely positive mode before this date. Despite this embellishment, the life of the ordinary people did not change drastically and continued to fluctuate in the following centuries. The great amount of historical material that portrays Baghdad after this period supports this proposition³⁵. In addition to local historical material, other materials assert this view. For example, Cooperson states that the famous traveller Ibn Battuta “found much to admire there even after the first Mogul onslaught”³⁶. In addition, Fletcher states in the century that followed the Mogul invasion, there was something of an ‘architectural revival’ after the fall of Baghdad³⁷. These remarks about the architecture of Baghdad illustrate a condition of recovery of physical structures at that time. The literature of historians and scholars like Ibn Battuta, Al-Qazwini and Al-Qasi Al-Baghdadi, who lived after this period, illustrates Baghdad as an object of wish and desire, an unsurpassed centre comparable to paradise, and “the mother of the world, the mistress of nations”³⁸. This literature demonstrates a continuous role of Baghdad as a venue of knowledge and learning. It indicates the unknown secret of attachment to Baghdad that started to grow gradually, as “nearly every generation of writers has felt the same way, with as much or as little justification”³⁹.

After the Moguls’ invasion, Baghdad became a target for a crowd of empires. In 802/1400 a group called Jalayirid controlled Baghdad, and in 813/1411 the Turkmen occupied it again. In less than hundred years the Safavids controlled the city during 913/1508, and in 940/1534, the Ottomans had power over Baghdad. Then the Safavids took it over again in 1030/1621 until 1047/1638 when the Ottomans regained it. The Mamluks started to govern Baghdad from the beginning of the eighteenth century, but they were involved with the *sultans*. Historians consider the year 1136/1750 as the beginning of the autonomous rule of the Mamluks, which lasted from 1246/1831 when the Ottomans controlled it completely until the British occupation in 1335/1917⁴⁰. Historians mark the age that starts with the Moguls’ occupation in 683/1258 and ends with the British occupation in 1335/1917 as the

³² Jawad, Susa, Makkiyya & Ma’ruf, *Baghdad*, p. 36. Also see Makkiyya (ed.), *Baghdad*, p. 76.

³³ Warren & Fethi, *Traditional houses in Baghdad*, p. 8.

³⁴ Makkiyya (ed.), *Baghdad*, p. 76.

³⁵ This material is demonstrated in chapters four and five of this thesis.

³⁶ Cooperson, ‘Baghdad in rhetoric and narrative’, pp. 99-113.

³⁷ Fletcher, & Musgrove, *Sir Banister Fletcher’s A history of architecture*, p. 605.

³⁸ Cooperson, ‘Baghdad in rhetoric and narrative’, p. 101.

³⁹ Cooperson, ‘Baghdad in rhetoric and narrative’, p. 103.

⁴⁰ For more information see Choueiri, *A companion to the history of the Middle East*. See also Khayyat, J (ed.) 1968, *Arba’at Qurun min tarekh Al-Iraq Al-Hadeeth*, by Stephen Hemsley Longrigg (in Arabic). And see Makkiyya (ed.), *Baghdad*.

intermediary history, and they mark the period following 1917 until now as the modern history of Baghdad. The age of empires, or what Crinson calls 'abstractions'⁴¹, brought an entire era of instability. With their intertwining effects on the city and their intermittent phases, those colonial forces left tangible imprints on culture and on the society, and strongly influenced the city's morphology. This brief illustration of the political history of Baghdad shows the uncertainty and transitoriness of different historical accounts, which indicates significant temporality of material structures and illustrates absences in historiography.

As the Ottomans ruled Baghdad for centuries, and both eighteenth and nineteenth centuries lie in the Ottoman period, it is important to elaborate on Ottoman historical accounts. However, the study is not restricted to the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, as the periods before and after witnessed significant events that implied a diverse and complex urban account of the city. In addition, applying the alternative method requires continuity and interconnection in the search, since interpreting specific times separately establishes a huge cut in the concept of fluidity of time, and gives the impression of greatly separated periods that lack any sign of continuity. However, the study focuses more on the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in order to attain more understanding of this period, especially in relation to architectural and urban development.

3.2 The Account of the Ottoman Empire in Historiography

The principles of the *infinite interlocking interpretation* method imply connecting different views on different periods to promote more understanding of history. Thus, in order to perceive the history of Baghdad in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, a study of the history of the wider region of Baghdad, with the different social networks with which it was connected, is important to understand the grounds of historical events. The subject of the Ottoman history is a central and a growing subject in historical studies at present. These studies are parts of the cultural investigation methodologies that are promoted in conventional historiography to provide specific links to the critical moments of transformation and change in various standards of the cities that were under the Ottoman control. In addition, these studies offer great insights into historical, geographical, economic and political circumstances of the intermediary history, which may promote historical understanding. Historical references for the studies of the Ottoman period are many, yet it appears that the cause of the vagueness of this history in the late eighteenth century has more to do with methodology than with limited data. Most historians had a tendency to situate the subject of their study within administrative and political accounts rather than economic and social histories.

In general, the prevailing attitude of current writings on the architectural history of the Ottoman period reflects a sense of antiquity. In addition to antiquity, it also generates a sense of pride for Turkish historians. The arguments proposed by these studies provoke a feeling that they are usually located in a world that does not exist anymore, which widens the gap between historical events, and creates barriers and challenges to historical understanding. In addition, the focus on specific terms that are not the centre of present studies such as Turkish towns, Arabic towns, *harem*, *ulema*, and *waqf* encourages this feeling of remoteness and unfamiliarity. I propose that this distance in time is not factual, since conventional approaches to historiography contributed to the creation and nourishment of these stances. It is an inevitable fact that the history of cities is a connected chain of events that cannot be

⁴¹ Crinson, M 2003, *Modern architecture and the end of Empire*, Burlington, VT, Ashgate, p.4.

separated. So, instead of this remoteness, I believe that the study of modern history as a continuation to the intermediary history assists in more understanding of history and promotes present and future advancements.

The Ottoman Empire was one of the largest and longest lasting empires in history. It was founded in 1299 and ended officially in 1922. The Ottomans were originally an ethnic group living in East Asia, and afterward they moved to north east Anatolia where they founded the empire under the leadership of a strong warrior called Osman, from which the name Ottoman is derived⁴². From the examination of the first moments of this empire, it becomes clear this empire is quite similar to other empires in history, which are basically political movements. The *sultan* is usually the highest authority in the empire, and he should be respected and obeyed instinctively. This situation is explained by Morkoc "God is watching, as also is the Sultan"⁴³. Conventional historiography associates the Ottoman Empire with Islam. The association of history and architecture with a religion was discussed in Chapter One and it became evident it has caused a great deal of confusion to historiography. On some occasions, the decisions of the *sultan* or other officials were contradictory to Islamic law, which suggests the influence of other aspects on these decisions⁴⁴.

The authority of Ottomans on the Baghdad area was discontinuous. At the beginning they ruled the area between 1534 and 1621, and then controlled it between 1638 and 1704. The third period of their direct rule on Baghdad was between 1831 and 1917⁴⁵. The consecutive interruptions of the same ruling power of Baghdad resulted in unstable conditions, which created its political strain and diminished its urban development. Although the issue of the terrible impacts of irregular rules is established by conventional methods, the focus of these methods is on the Ottoman Empire rather than other powers, which indicates the invalidity of these sources. As the focus of this study is on urban history, it highlights historical accounts related to the urban development of Ottoman cities rather than Ottoman history in general.

3.3 The Features of Ottoman Cities in Conventional Methods

"The eighteenth century issues of public life and concern for public order never ceased to overlap"⁴⁶

This section examines the history of Baghdad within the framework of Iraq that constituted three Iraqi provinces during the Ottoman period; Baghdad, Basra, and Mosul. It also associates the history of Baghdad with the issues of other cities in the Ottoman Empire. Conventional studies of Ottoman cities in the eighteenth century are centred on questions of aesthetics and affluence, such as public order, arts and entertainment. These sources examine

⁴² For more details refer to Chisholm H 1911, *The Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol.7, Constantinople, the capital of the Turkish Empire. Also refer to Fletcher & Musgrove 1987, *Sir Banister Fletcher's A history of architecture*.

⁴³ Morkoc, *A study of Ottoman narratives on architecture*, p.127.

⁴⁴ The irresponsible administration of taxes and appointing people from other religions as high officials are some examples of those decisions. The narration of Abadah about Khan Lawand which was a residency for soldiers is evidence. He narrates if Istanbul is pleased with someone he will never be punished on any crime he commits. See Ra'of, *Al-Iqd Al-Lami' bi athar Baghdad wal masajed wal jawame'*, p.202.

⁴⁵ See Al-Warid, *Hawadeth Baghdad fi 12 qarn*. See Choueiri, *A companion to the history of the Middle East*.

⁴⁶ Hamadeh, SH 2007, 'Public spaces and the garden culture of Istanbul in the eighteenth century', in Aksan, VH, Goffman, D (ed.) *The early modern Ottomans: remapping the Empire*, New York, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, p. 299.

social and public life topics, yet this examination is always connected to the advocacy of the *sultan*. Hence, they can be considered as contributions to institutional history rather than proper urbanism⁴⁷. However, a significant shift in attitudes towards general urban affairs is evident in some studies. The study of the Ottoman towns by the French historian Gilles Veinstein can be considered an example of these approaches. Veinstein explores the possibility of the survival of a unique type of town characteristic of the Ottoman Empire that could naturally be stamped as 'Ottoman Town'. He argues that Istanbul *sultans* were interested in the city, and developed a proactive urban policy that was implemented in various ways and at different levels⁴⁸.

Veinstein proposes there was a policy of differentiation between different cities controlled by the Ottomans, since Ottoman towns experienced specific conditions connected to their integration into the empire, and those conditions benefited specific towns unevenly, depending on the positions of these towns in the political, administrative, strategic, and economic system of the empire. He states Istanbul was privileged being both the main centre of attraction for all the empire's commercial exchanges, and the primary object of imperial concern in terms of settlement, supplies, facilities, developments, and beautification. He suggests the greater or lesser distance from the capital as a main cause for this differentiation. Conversely, he proposes another reason for the disparity, which is a 'dividing line' that places Arabic provinces on one side, and Anatolia and non-Arabic areas on the other. He notes this explains why historic Middle-Eastern cities rank far behind Istanbul in the classification of the empire's main cities⁴⁹. However, he presumes that despite having been considered fundamentally different, Arabic and central provinces "have been studied rather differently by different people"⁵⁰.

These remarks clearly refer to the impact of different attitudes in historiography that more than any other factor contributed to the differentiation between Ottoman towns. It is reasonable that distance might be a barrier and a distinguishing element due to the difficult transportation circumstances at that time. In addition, it is common that the Ottoman sultans gave considerable attention to the architectural development in their capital Istanbul more than other cities. However, despite being Arabic regions, cities like Aleppo and Damascus were among the Ottoman territories that were "strikingly urbanised, when compared with Europe"⁵¹. These observations challenge the propositions of distance and dividing lines as main factors of differentiation. Historians believe these cities should have maintained a great level of prosperity, but they lost relative importance during the eighteenth century with the drying up of the Iranian silk trade⁵². There have been other factors in the decline apart from language or distance, and it seems that specific issues were exaggerated in current historiography to verify a specific approach.

⁴⁷ An example of these studies: Atasoy, N 2004, 'Ottoman garden pavilions and tents', in *Muqarnas*, vol. Vol. 21, Essays in Honor of J. M. Rogers pp. 15-19

⁴⁸ Veinstein, G 2008, 'The Ottoman town', pp.207-212.

⁴⁹ Veinstein, 'The Ottoman town', pp.207-212.

⁵⁰ Veinstein, 'The Ottoman town', pp.207-212.

⁵¹ Inalcik & Quataert, *An economic and social history of the Ottoman Empire*, p.646. For more about the Ottoman town see Kafescioglu, C 2009, *Constantinople/Istanbul: cultural encounter, imperial vision, and the construction of the Ottoman capital*, The Pennsylvania State University Press, PA. Also see Cerasi, M 2005, 'The Urban and Architectural Evolution of the Istanbul Divanyolu: Urban Aesthetics and Ideology in Ottoman Town Building', *Muqarnas*, Vol. 22, pp. 189-232.

⁵² Inalcik & Quataert, *An economic and social history of the Ottoman Empire*, p.673.

The same thing can be assumed about Baghdad, which experienced damage in the architectural structure in the eighteenth century, and it became less appealing, compared with other cities. Yet the reason of this change was due to other causes, such as being a battleground for constant fights between different groups, which excludes geographical proximity and ethnic diversity partially from the equation. It is important to note that the Baghdad area was larger than the city at present; it consisted of a number of cities that currently have separate municipalities, as Iraqi land was incorporated into three main provinces; Baghdad, Basra, and Mosul⁵³ (Figure 9). Abdullah refers to the impacts of political policies; “the empire’s provinces of Mosul, Baghdad, and Basra were often regarded as significant only in a military sense”⁵⁴. So, in the case of Baghdad and other Iraqi cities, architectural and urban development did not possess a priority in the government plans, because they were the frontier lines, and because the governors tended to collect taxes rather than to improve the city’s conditions. This view eliminates the possibility of a direct correlation between distance and significance.



Figure 9: The Ottoman Empire and the provinces of Iraq [Inalcik & Quataret 1997]

Despite describing them questionably as fundamentally different, Veinstein notes that the integration of different cities into the immense Ottoman structure was a sign of prosperity, and that this integration brought relative order, security, and unified legislations. In terms of art and architecture, he suggests those measures contributed to a certain standardisation of production, although different situations provoked obvious divergences in architectural styles and terminology. These remarks are consistent with relative diversity in the art and architecture of cities controlled by the Ottomans, which contradicts the earlier suggestion of

⁵³ Tripp, C 2007, *A history of Iraq*, 3rd edn, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

⁵⁴ Abdullah, T 2001, *Merchants, Mamluks, and murder: the political economy of trade in eighteenth-century Basra*, SUNY series in the social and economic history of the Middle East, State University of New York Press, Albany, Britain, p.6.

differentiation measures between those cities. While historians often relate the signs of order in Ottoman cities to the Islamic rules, Veinstein states that the unified measures were “stimulated by developing relations with the West”⁵⁵, as he refers to the municipal reforms in the Ottoman Empire that came in the context of the *tanzimat* (the reform laws) that began in the 1830s.

In her discussion about the *tanzimat* urban historiography, Nora Lafi asserts that these reforms were influenced partially by Europeans, but she argues that they were not importations into a blank canvas, as “there was in every Ottoman city an old regime urban system”⁵⁶. The reforms were characterised by various attempts to ‘modernise’ the Ottoman Empire. Lafi indicates Europe in mid-nineteenth century was not an island of modernity, and French historiography “has also insisted on the importation tool”⁵⁷. Nevertheless, this unique urban system was associated with Ottoman cities before the nineteenth century reforms, so it would certainly be a point of pride for the normal inhabitants and what Lafi calls as the ‘notability’ who carried the urban government in their hands⁵⁸. Furthermore, regardless of the fundamental differentiation proposed by Veinstein, he notes “all Ottoman towns undoubtedly share common features, such as less continuous circulation zones geometrically and topologically and more regular plots which emerged over time as private housing and concerns”⁵⁹. He admires the urban change towards regular plots and constant zones, which suggests the lack of appreciation of the traditional urbanism of those cities, and the promotion of the globalising motivation of urbanism schemes of the twentieth century.

Once again, Veinstein uses generalisation to describe Ottoman cities, contrary to the earlier proposal of differentiation, which indicates the capacity of historiography for confusion and mixed suppositions in analysing historical accounts of these cities. There is no doubt that the cities under the Ottomans’ control shared similar social and architectural features occasionally. The similarities were the consequences of the parallel laws enforced on those areas and easy movement between different regions in the empire. On the other hand, the divergence was mainly a result of different political circumstances. Having discussed the general conditions of cities in the Ottoman Empire, a detailed explanation of specific conditions of Baghdad in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries comprises the next section.

3.4 Narrations of Baghdad in the First Half of the 18th Century

In order to implement the alternative method which promotes continuation in history, this section examines the historical accounts of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, as they had great impacts on the situation in the late decades of that century. Some historians suggest this period marks the beginning of the Mamluks’ rule in Iraq, yet others propose that autonomous Mamluks’ rule took place between mid-eighteenth century and the fourth decade of the nineteenth century, which presents another example of confusion in the historiography of Baghdad. However, some suggest that the groundwork of the Mamluks’ rule started in the

⁵⁵ Veinstein, ‘The Ottoman town’, pp.207-212.

⁵⁶ Lafi, N 2007, ‘The Ottoman municipal Reforms between old regime and modernity: Towards a new interpretive paradigm’. In Cihangir, E 2007, *Uluslararası Eminonu Sempozyumu: tebligler kitab International Symposium on Eminonu: the book of notifications*, Eminonu Belediyesi Başkanlg, Istanbul, p. 354.

⁵⁷ Lafi, ‘The Ottoman municipal reforms between old regime and modernity’, p. 355.

⁵⁸ Lafi, ‘The Ottoman municipal reforms between old regime and modernity’, p. 356.

⁵⁹ Veinstein, ‘The Ottoman town’, pp.207-212.

seventeenth century with the appointment of Hassan *pasha* the Little (1638-1643)⁶⁰. This governor launched an improvement scheme by repairing shrines and different buildings, caring for the gardens and amenities of the city, and trying to attract back to Baghdad the people who deserted it for a tribal refuge because of constant fights and disasters⁶¹. Mamluks were originally a group of young Georgian and Circassian slaves, who were sold in Tbilisi markets. They converted to Islam, and trained in special military schools in the Ottoman territories, and were later appointed to army or government positions⁶².

It is believed that due to the plans of Hassan *pasha* the Little, the situation in Baghdad seemed to be improved in the early years of the eighteenth century. Yet historical materials demonstrate different views of the city. The authors' objectives together with their historical references put a very different impact on the historical writings. For example, the historical narrative of Abdul-Rahman Al-Suwaidi "*Hadeqat Al-zawraa fi seerat Al-wuzaraa*" demonstrates an image of Baghdad different to the representation displayed by Stephen Longrigg in his book "*Four centuries of modern Iraq*". Al-Suwaidi elucidates the history of two famous Mamluk rulers of Baghdad Hassan *pasha* the great⁶³ (1704-1723) and his son Ahmed *pasha* (1723-1747). He states that before the time of these two *pashas* Baghdad consisted of empty ruins and people were powerless because of corruption and the long term destruction in the area⁶⁴.

He portrays an enhanced city image during Hassan *pasha*'s rule, since the collapsing walls of Baghdad were renovated along with the ditch, in order to improve the city's defence lines, in addition to renovating some mosques and building khans on both parts of Baghdad. Moreover, Al-Suwaidi points out the construction movement was hastened after 1716 because many people from neighbouring Iran took refuge in Baghdad due to the extreme situation in their motherland (famine and siege). Al-Suwaidi explains how the new immigrants to Baghdad found a better place and good in a city that was full of orchards and was desired by many people. In addition, he demonstrates economic assistance in this period, which resulted in amending two heavy taxes in 1717⁶⁵. In the palace, corruption and luxuries started to appear as signs of prosperity and well-being⁶⁶. Yet towards the end of Hassan *pasha*'s rule, plague occurred in Baghdad in 1720 and many people were killed either by the disease or the famine, which affected the city's success and attractiveness.

The remarks of Al-Suwaidi illustrate a superior image of Baghdad in late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. However, an examination of other sources indicates self-reliance in urban developments, and suggests the general construction efforts were left to individuals. For example, the determination for renovating the city's wall and ditch was intended to protect the ruling power rather than developing the city. According to Longrigg, the visitor to Baghdad at that time notices that "mosques [were] founded, but never a road, school, or hospital; taxes increased or modified, but no principle of taxation conceived; policeman and

⁶⁰ Al-Warid, *Hawadeth Baghdad fi 12 qarn*, p.200. See also Jawad, M & Susa, A 1958, *Dalil kharitat Baghdad Al-Mufasssal fi khitat Baghdad qadiman wa-hadithan* (Arabic), Baghdad, p. 292.

⁶¹ Longrigg, SH 1968, *Four centuries of modern Iraq*, Librairie du Liban, Beirut, pp.81-82.

⁶² Nawras, AMK 1975, *Hukam Al-Mamalik 1750-1831*(Arabic), silsilat Al-Kutub Al-Haditha 84, Al-Maktaba Al-Wataniyya (The National Library) number 611, Baghdad.

⁶³ Al-Warid, *Hawadeth Baghdad fi 12 qarn*, p.213.

⁶⁴ Khulusi, S (ed.) 1962, *Tarekh Baghdad (Hadeqat Al-Zawra' fi sirat Al-Wuzara')* by Abdul-Rahman Al-Suwaidi, vol. 1, Mataba'at Al-Za'em, Baghdad.p.17.

⁶⁵ Those taxes are the Badj (الباج) and Tamgha (الطمغة). The Badj is a tax on everything entering Baghdad by land and Tamgha is a tax on things coming to the city by river. See Khulusi, *Tarekh Baghdad*, p. 68.

⁶⁶ Khulusi (ed.) *Tarekh Baghdad*, pp.18-32.

judge appointed, but not controlled”⁶⁷. Also this period witnessed the establishment of a special office that brought Mamluks, trained them and hired them to control the situation in Baghdad⁶⁸, which reflects a mistrust of Baghdadi people, and suggests an exaggeration in Al-Suwaidi's remarks that shows loyalty to the ruler rather than truth.

Another big issue associated with the Mamluks' rule and which intensified during Hassan *pasha*'s rule is the constant fights with the rebelling tribes who refused to pay taxes. Historians such as Al-Suwaidi, Al-Karkukali, and Fa'eq Beg usually admire those governors and describe them as strong, although these fights were a result of unfair attitudes to people and to the environment. The severe damage caused to the environment of Baghdad, and the careless attitude has never been raised as an issue in historical accounts. For example, Al-Suwaidi narrates that in order to reach some rebellious tribes who sought refuge in the historical marshes in south Iraq, Hassan *pasha* ordered the throwing of firewood, soil and sand tightened with thick ropes to create a passage for the soldiers⁶⁹, which caused great damage to the environment of the river. Yet Al-Suwaidi's narration gives an impression of pride instead of concerns. When we learn that Khadeeja, the granddaughter of Hassan *pasha*, instructed Al-Suwaidi and supported him to write this book, it becomes clear why Al-Suwaidi avoided illustrating these negative images⁷⁰.

The rule of Ahmed *pasha*, who succeeded his father Hassan *pasha* in 1723, was an extension of these policies. In addition to the usual disasters of epidemics and floods, this period was distinguished as a period of extensive fighting with the Safavids and their successors, which resulted in continuous sieges and famine in Baghdad. Longrigg describes the period of Ahmed *pasha*'s ruling, which constitutes a quarter century, as “Iraq in war time”⁷¹. Ahmed *pasha* continued to build a powerful military-administrative apparatus based largely on imported Georgian slaves or Mamluks⁷². However, the tendency to build and renovate mosques and schools was maintained. This period witnessed an increase in the number of historians and travellers from the neighbouring areas and from Europe. Those travellers include Sheikh Mustafa bin Kamal Al-Deen Al-Siddiqi from Damascus in 1726, Sheikh Mohammed bin Aqila Al-Makki in 1732, and the German traveller Carsten Niebuhr in 1733⁷³, which indicates a relative stability in the area at this time.

Longrigg expresses a positive change in Baghdad's history and historiography in the early eighteenth century, yet he also associates these changes with the ruler. He notes that with the appointment of Hassan *pasha* as a *wali* (governor) for Baghdad in 1704, the history of the city enters a new phase. He expresses a satisfaction with the great amount of historical material of that time, and suggests that the plentiful material is due to Hassan *pasha*'s long term in his position, which had not happened before⁷⁴. Longrigg extensively illustrates the wars led by Hassan *pasha*, and calls those wars ‘the wars of giants’, as he praises this *wali* and his father for overcoming external problems⁷⁵. He uses the word ‘discipline’ when describing the fights

⁶⁷ Longrigg, *Four centuries of modern Iraq*, p.76.

⁶⁸ Nawras, *Hukam Al-Mamalik 1750-1831*, p.25.

⁶⁹ Khulusi (ed.), *Tarekh Baghdad*, p.56.

⁷⁰ See the introduction by Safa Khulusi, in Khulusi (ed.), *Tarekh Baghdad*, p.7.

⁷¹ Khayyat (ed.), *Arba'at qurun min tarekh Al-Iraq Al-Hadeeth*, p.187.

⁷² Abdullah, *Merchants, mamluks, and murder*, p.11.

⁷³ Al-Warid, *Hawadeth Baghdad fi 12 qarn*, pp.217-219.

⁷⁴ Khayyat (ed.), *Arba'at qurun min tarekh Al-Iraq Al-Hadeeth*.

⁷⁵ Khayyat (ed.), *Arba'at qurun min tarekh Al-Iraq Al-Hadeeth*, pp.154-155.

with tribes for tax reasons. This word and its corresponding term in Arabic, *ta'deeb*⁷⁶, have been utilised frequently in other historical narratives, which indicates the strong effects of transmitted histories, and the wide use of specific linguistic techniques to illustrate events in historiography. Longrigg does not offer much depiction of the urban forms of Baghdad, but he relates the social characteristics, as he describes the society of Baghdad a 'tribal society'⁷⁷. According to Mohammed Ali, the tribes who lived in the new urban cities preserved their tribal traditions for a long time, but their social and urban traditions were transformed gradually⁷⁸.

An overall image of the first half of the eighteenth century historiography indicates a typical situation of different attitudes and different techniques to portray the image of the city. The interpretation of events depended on the aims of the historical writing and the knowledge of the author. However, these sources constitute a great deal of information that enhances the understanding of the history of Baghdad by comparing different narrations. Still, these sources provide little information about the urban history of Baghdad, as urbanism was not strongly emphasised in their aims and objectives of the historical writing. This period witnessed the early steps towards a political autonomy by the Ottomans. Though this tendency was not clear at this stage because the two rulers were appointed by the *sultan*, and they were planning a gradual separation from the Ottomans' authority⁷⁹.

3.5 The Urban History of Baghdad between 1750 and 1831

The urban history of Baghdad in late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries is defined by a myriad of historiographical contradictions. While some historians portray the situation of the eighteenth century Baghdad as 'massive chaos'⁸⁰, others suggest that Baghdad experienced political stability under the Ottomans' rule⁸¹. The eighteenth and nineteenth century environment was on one hand promising, on the other terrible. While Baghdad experienced increasing tendency to build, due to occasional demographic growth, terrible disasters (either natural or manmade) had a great impact on the city's urban situation. The examination of the urban development history encompasses the study of many aspects of the city's history, including political, social, economic and specific architectural history. The study of these issues is vital to the alternative method that considers all available material, but examines them, refines them and combines them with other overlooked issues, in order to provide an integrated interpretation of urban history, and promote other methods of understanding and writing histories.

3.5.1 Political History of Baghdad between 1750 and 1831

The reading of the historiography of Baghdad in this period is examined through an exploration of a number of historical materials, to interrelate different methods and attitudes, which is required in the process of applying the alternative method in historiography. With the beginning of the rule of Suleyman Abu Leila, who broke away from the Ottoman

⁷⁶ The corresponding Arabic term for discipline is تَأْدِيب.

⁷⁷ Longrigg, *Four centuries of modern Iraq*, p.11.

⁷⁸ Mohammed Ali, *Madinat Baghdad*, p.139.

⁷⁹ Khayyat (ed.), *Arba'at qurun min tarekh Al-Iraq Al-Hadeeth*, p.155.

⁸⁰ Nawras, *Hukam Al-Mamalik 1750-1831*, p.30.

⁸¹ Bianca, *Urban form in the Arab world*, p249.

administration, many historians mark the year 1163/1750 the starting point of the autonomous Mamluks' rule of Baghdad and the surrounding areas⁸². The book '*Tarekh Baghdad*' originally written in Turkish by Suleyman Fa'eq Beg documents good insights by a resident of Baghdad who was close to the administrative system⁸³. Fa'eq states although both Hassan *pasha* and Ahmed *pasha* contributed to urban and economic growth, and to the increase in wealth and prosperity of Baghdad, both Mamluk governors were connected to the *sultan* more than Suleyman Abu Leila (1750-1762) who succeeded them. Fa'eq calls the governors after mid eighteenth century 'grand governors' who sustained the same policies of the preceding rulers. He states Suleyman Abu Leila (the son-in-law of Ahmed *pasha*) was determined to improve the situation and increase peace by fighting the rebel tribes⁸⁴. He considers the intensities of the tribal fights as a measure of the grandness of those governors.

Tribal fights and tax collection are complex issues that need to be examined in further studies. Those troubles reflected unstable situations, and contributed to a gradual weakening of the city's urban structures. In relation to historiography, this problem became a constant focus on individuals and events, with less determination to establish ideas and plans in relation to the urban system, the social system, and the environment. These issues are also discussed often from the governors' viewpoints, rather than discussing it as a major social and historical matter. Another issue that continued to be the focus of historiography of this period is the introduction of a big number of Mamluks, and their education for work in the government administrative office. Fa'eq notes that Suleyman Abu Leila encouraged this plan because of his strong inclination towards those of his ethnicity⁸⁵. Similarly, Longrigg notes "under Abu Leila the use of Georgian freedmen in important posts was much increased"⁸⁶. Bringing more Mamluks to work in Baghdad undoubtedly changed the demographic map of Baghdad and widened the gap between people and the government. In addition, these schemes created two different social classes: Mamluk allies, and city dwellers⁸⁷. Despite these negative impacts, the issue is dealt with normally in conventional historiography.

After the death of Suleyman Abu Leila, his deputy⁸⁸ Ali *pasha* took his position. Fa'eq states this governor wasn't successful; he was extremely mistrusted and was killed after two years by his deputy Omar *pasha* and the military force⁸⁹, and Ali *pasha* was followed by Omar *pasha* (1764-1775). According to Fa'eq, the situation worsened in this period with the increase in tribal uprising and with the plague of 1772, which resulted in a great loss of many scholars and highly educated people⁹⁰. Consequently, a huge amount of expressive literature and poetry was composed by the scholars who survived the plague. Those prose works contained important insights of the city's urban environment and history. The historian and religious scholar Abdul-Rahman Al-Suwaidi wrote a book to document the history of Baghdad during this plague between the year 1772 and 1778. Although he praised Omar *pasha* with a poem when he was appointed as a governor to Baghdad, Al-Suwaidi was upset

⁸² See Nawras, *Hukam Al-Mamalik 1750-1831*. Also see Longrigg, *Four centuries of modern Iraq*. Also see Khulusi (ed.), *Tarekh Baghdad*.

⁸³ This book is also called *Mir'at Al'Zawraa'*. The author Suleyman Fa'eq Beg is the son of Taleb Agha who had a high position during the ruling of the last Mamluk ruler Dawood *pasha* (1817-1831).

⁸⁴ Fa'eq Beg, S 2010, *Tarekh Baghdad* (Arabic), 1st edn, Dar Al-Rafidayn for publishing, Beirut, Lebanon.

⁸⁵ Fa'eq Beg, *Tarekh Baghdad*, pp.18-19.

⁸⁶ Longrigg, *Four centuries of modern Iraq*, p.170.

⁸⁷ Inalcik & Quataert, *An economic and social history of the Ottoman Empire*, p.676.

⁸⁸ This position was called Katkhuda (كٲخدا)

⁸⁹ Fa'eq Beg, *Tarekh Baghdad*, p.19.

⁹⁰ Fa'eq Beg, *Tarekh Baghdad*, p.20.

with him after the plague⁹¹. The writings of Al-Suwaidi, together with the poetry of other scholars (Kadhem Al-Uzari, Saleh Al-Tamimi and Abdul-Baqi Al-Omari), are examined in Chapter Five of this thesis.

As with Ali *pasha*, Omar *pasha* was killed in 1775 by another governor called Mustafa *pasha*, who was appointed by the *sultan*. The new governor was selfish and had little knowledge about the distinctive criteria of Baghdad and Iraq. Thus, he was replaced after one year by Abdullah *pasha* (1776-1777) who was passionate about amusement and entertainment more than anything else⁹². Historians who wrote about this period indicate the treasury of Baghdad was extremely full, and that the officers who were sent to Baghdad during this time were astonished with the high level of prosperity and wealth. The story of Selim Sirri, who was sent to Baghdad to solve a big problem, is narrated by a number of historians, who cite that as soon as he entered Baghdad, he immersed himself in the fun and entertainment and forgot his task⁹³. Accordingly, Mamluk officers collected massive amounts of money and became very rich compared with others. This issue has never been discussed in conventional historiography, since many writings elaborate on the governors' accounts, and connect the success of the governor with the political situation and personal relationships rather than other aspects.

In 1777 Abdullah *pasha* died, and consequently a civil war started in Baghdad due to the clashes over the governor's position. This war lasted for five months, and one can imagine how much fear, instability and destruction was caused by this war. Eventually, another governor called Hassan *pasha* (1778-1779) was appointed by the *sultan*. Likewise, this *wali's* ruling of Baghdad was short, and he was busy with entertainment and fighting the rebellious tribes for taxes. According to Nawras, the residents of Baghdad were so upset with the continuous fights, they started to erect dividing walls for security, and they also attacked the government quarter or *Saray*. The *wali* escaped to the other side of Baghdad (Karkh) but he caught a disease and died shortly after⁹⁴. Subsequent governors were mentioned by a number of historians such as Al-Suwaidi, Nawras and Al-Karkukaly⁹⁵. However, Fa'eq mentions their names briefly, which might be understood as a favourable omission of the author from a short and a boring period of time. Nevertheless, this explicates how conventional history gives a great focus to some periods and ignores others. For example, Fa'eq emphasises the role of the subsequent governor Suleyman *Al-Kabeer* (the old), who gained a great deal of attention in transmitted historiographies on his ruling period (1780-1802).

Historiography demonstrates a much enhanced image of the general atmosphere of the city with the appointment of Suleyman *Al-Kabeer* as a governor of Baghdad. In 1779 Suleyman was a ruler in Basra⁹⁶. After some troubles and a siege of Basra by the Iranian military forces he was arrested and imprisoned in Iran. Fa'eq states that the British consul in Shiraz

⁹¹ Ra'of (ed.), *Tarekh hawadeth Baghdad wal Basrah*.

⁹² Fa'eq Beg, *Tarekh Baghdad*.

⁹³ See Fa'eq Beg, *Tarekh Baghdad*. Also see Ra'of (ed.), *Tarekh hawadeth Baghdad wal Basrah*. Also see Ra'of, *Al-Iqd Al-lami' bi athar Baghdad wal masajed wal jawame'*.

⁹⁴ Nawras, *Hukam Al-Mamalik 1750-1831*, p.44.

⁹⁵ Al-Karkukaly, R 1992, *Dawhat Al-Wozara' fi tarekh hawadeth Baghdad Al-Zawra'* (Arabic), Al-Shareef Al-Radhi Publishing, Qum.

⁹⁶ According to Abdullah, both Suleyman abu Leila and Suleyman *Al-Kabeer* (the old) were *mutasallims* (rulers) of Basra before their accession to the post of *wali* of Baghdad and the same is true with Ahmed *pasha*, which explains their strong relations with the British Resident in Basra. See Abdullah *Merchants, mamluks, and murder*, p.29.

interceded successfully for him to both the Ottomans and Iranians until he was released⁹⁷. In Basra, Nawras narrates the British representative supported Suleyman and sent money to Istanbul to get approvals from the head officers to appoint Suleyman as a governor of Baghdad. He notes that the nomination by British officials of Suleyman *Al-Kabeer* (the old) was an extension to their long relations with him since 1765⁹⁸.

Nawras describes the long ruling period of this *wali*, which exceeded 22 years, as a period full of 'massive events'⁹⁹. These events include corruption of the administrative system, intense tribal upheavals, and dangerous Wahhabi's attacks. Fa'eq notes that this *wali* tried to restore order and defeat the corruption on both internal and external levels. He illustrates a problem regarding a fight for the deputy governor's position, which created a lot of tension and disarray in the community. He also states the treasury of Baghdad was full of money and expensive goods that were collected from the merchants and farmers. The *wali* sent a large amount of money to Istanbul each year to please the *sultan*. In addition, he narrates when Suleyman the old died in 1802, his deputy Ali *pasha* was astonished at the great amount of money that had accumulated in Baghdad's treasury. He thought he was the owner of those funds, so he distributed a part of this wealth to the community to gain their recognition¹⁰⁰.

These statements show that internal and external fights, which were related either to tax collection or political trouble, continued to exist in this period, or maybe increased, which suggests another reasons for the great focus on this governor in historiography. Longrigg expresses a satisfaction with the ruling strategies of Suleyman the old. He notes with his entry in Baghdad, this governor "opens the golden age of the slave-government of Iraq"¹⁰¹. He suggests the long misrule of the Mamluks "sprang from the absence of will to govern well"¹⁰². Longrigg considers by giving permission for a permanent British agent to be appointed in Baghdad in 1798, Suleyman *pasha* accomplished a great achievement. He notes, "in permitting the British Resident to become the second man in Iraq the Mamluk *pashas* had shown some recognition of the means of progress, some willingness to be guided, some lightening of prejudice, occasional friendship and courtesy"¹⁰³. For Longrigg, the measure of success of the ruler is to enhance the idea of British leadership. He notes thereafter, "Baghdad became the chief centre of British influence"¹⁰⁴.

After Suleyman *Al-Kabeer* (the old), the governance of Baghdad was in the hands of short term governors who could not achieve a lot during their rule because of their short reign. When Suleyman the old died in 1802, Ali *pasha* was appointed as a governor to Baghdad. He continued the same policies of fighting tribes for taxes, and he also fought the Wahhabis. This *wali* was killed in 1807 and Suleyman the little became the *wali* in 1807; but he was also killed in 1810 and then followed by Abdullah *pasha*. In 1812, Abdullah *pasha* was killed, and in 1813 Said *pasha*, son of Suleyman the old, became the governor¹⁰⁵. As noted by Izz Al-Din, Said, who was only twenty two years old when he became a *wali* was a weak governor and was guided by his mother. He spent large amounts of the Baghdad treasury on his

⁹⁷ Fa'eq Beg, *Tarekh Baghdad*, p.23.

⁹⁸ Nawras, *Hukam Al-Mamalik 1750-1831*, p.44.

⁹⁹ Nawras, *Hukam Al-Mamalik 1750-1831*, p.46.

¹⁰⁰ Fa'eq Beg, *Tarekh Baghdad*, p.35.

¹⁰¹ Longrigg, *Four centuries of modern Iraq*, p.198.

¹⁰² Longrigg, *Four centuries of modern Iraq*, p.324.

¹⁰³ Longrigg, *Four centuries of modern Iraq*, p.257.

¹⁰⁴ Longrigg, *Four centuries of modern Iraq*, p.254.

¹⁰⁵ For more details refer to Al-Warid, *Hawadeth Baghdad fi 12 qarn*. Also see Nawras, *Hukam Al-Mamalik 1750-1831*.

entertainment¹⁰⁶. In 1816 Said *pasha* was killed and Dawud *pasha*, the son-in-law of Suleyman the old, was appointed as a *wali*. Dawud remained a governor of Baghdad until 1831¹⁰⁷ when the Ottomans sent a military force to Baghdad, and succeeded in putting an end to the Mamluks' rule.

Apart from the fluctuation and instability in government, the early decades of the nineteenth century witnessed a few remarkable changes in both social and urban development of Baghdad. Al-Warid states a market complex was opened in Bab Al-Agha in 1802¹⁰⁸. He also narrates that in 1821 the first stone press was established in Al-Kadhemiyya, north Baghdad, and in 1830 the first mechanical press was established in Baghdad and was called '*matba'at Dar Assalam*'¹⁰⁹. In addition, he indicates in 1825 new roads were opened in relation to the bridge from both sides¹¹⁰. On a broader urban level, nineteenth century Baghdad experienced more urban sprawl following the gradual destruction of the defence walls and the constant fights inside and outside the *Saray*, which made moving away from the central administrative area a favourable option. Therefore, people started to move from eastern Baghdad outside the wall borders. They moved across the river to the western side (Karkh), which contributed to the urban growth of this part of the city.

Historians associate these positive changes with Dawud *pasha* who encouraged building and renovating, established more schools, and had good relations with many scholars.¹¹¹ Longrigg suggests that besides supporting learning, Dawud *pasha's* generosity, and his frank independence of Istanbul made him more popular¹¹². Further, Dina Khoury supports the idea of the positive change brought up by Dawud *pasha*, and suggests there are three important social and political developments in Baghdad in the nineteenth century: the rise of Dawud *pasha* as a governor of Baghdad, the increasing power of the religious scholars (*ulema*) and urban elites in the economic and social life of the city and the gradual subjugation of other localities and political centres of power in Iraq to Baghdad¹¹³. However, the rule of Dawud *pasha* was not much different from that of other Mamluks, as he was also keen to collect the taxes, and during his rule estates were freely bestowed without restrictions¹¹⁴.

Undoubtedly nineteenth century Baghdad experienced some urban growth, although historiography inflated the characteristics of this century mythically, and extended monolayer interpretation that focuses on a single factor and does not consider other factors, such as the great role of scholars, the decline in disasters, and the inward and outward migrations that encouraged more construction projects. Moreover, the psychological impression of the nineteenth century as "one of the exceptional changes in Ottoman social, economic and political life"¹¹⁵, because it has links to the reform plans, drew an improvised picture of that period in historiography. Once more, the main concerns of historiography are politically

¹⁰⁶ Izz Al-Din, Y 1976, *Dawud pasha wa nihayat Al-Mamalik* (Arabic), Matba'at Al-Sha'b, Baghdad, p. 43.

¹⁰⁷ Al-Warid, *Hawadeth Baghdad fi 12 qarn*, p.239.

¹⁰⁸ Al-Warid, *Hawadeth Baghdad fi 12 qarn*, p.232

¹⁰⁹ Al-Warid, *Hawadeth Baghdad fi 12 qarn*, pp. 236, 239.

¹¹⁰ Al-Warid, *Hawadeth Baghdad fi 12 qarn*, p. 237.

¹¹¹ See Izz Al-Din, *Dawud pasha wa nihayat Al-Mamalik*. Also see Nawras, *Hukam Al-Mamalik 1750-1831*. See also Longrigg, *Four centuries of modern Iraq*.

¹¹² Longrigg, *Four centuries of modern Iraq*, p. 250.

¹¹³ Khoury D R 2007, 'Who is a true Muslim? Exclusion and inclusion among polemicists of reform in nineteenth-century Baghdad', in Aksan, VH, Goffman, D (ed.), *The early modern Ottomans*, p.273.

¹¹⁴ Longrigg, *Four centuries of modern Iraq*, p. 30.

¹¹⁵ Inalcik & Quataert, *An economic and social history of the Ottoman Empire*, p.761.

related issues rather than other matters of the city. These remarks assert how specific attitudes in historiography have a great impact on the understanding of the historical events.

An overall image of the Mamluks' rule in Baghdad in historiography suggests four main characteristics of this period: continuous troubles in relation to tax collection; a tendency for more independence from Istanbul and a great determination to govern Baghdad; unfair dealing with land use and inconsistency with the aims and outcomes of building and renovating; and promoting the idea of reforms and warm relations with Europe. Generally, historians suggest during this period Iraq witnessed many attempts to establish strong local governments with more independence from Istanbul, and more enhancement of the idea of uniting Iraq under the sovereignty of Baghdad as a central city¹¹⁶.

The position of a governor of Baghdad was an outstanding goal for many men who were keen to achieve it. Izz Al-Din notes the *wali* who was appointed to govern Baghdad was considered the best, so people would buy the position and do whatever they could to collect money¹¹⁷. However, historiography focuses on the achievements of those governors and on the principles of reform as signs of a good will. Despite the appreciation of achievements, the general impression is always negative and connected to different clashes: "Iraq ... stood in an intermediate position between Syria and Egypt, sharing with Syria the problem of the tribes, sharing with Egypt the Mamluks retinues"¹¹⁸. Nawras explains more undesirable attitudes of the Mamluks: there was not one year which passed without turmoil, fear, and famine. Out of the total eleven Mamluks who ruled Baghdad, six of them ended being killed, which reflects the massive chaos and internal conflicts during their rule of Baghdad¹¹⁹. This indicates the coexistence of contradictory issues in historiography, and the difference between references depending on the aims of writing.

This historiography provides important visions that can be combined with other insights suggested in poetry and literature to establish an integrated interpretation of history. The historians who wrote about this period are classified into three groups. The first group comprises local historians who witnessed the historical events or were alive at some stage during that period, such as Al-Suwaidi, Fa'eq, and Al-Karkukaly. Their writings usually follow the traditional methods of storytelling and focus on the rulers more than other parts of the society. They also tend to describe negative issues gently to maintain good relations with the governors. The second group includes foreign scholars who recorded their historical impressions, such as Niebuhr, Buckingham and Longrigg. The focus of these writings is on the political issues, tribal conflicts, and the relations between different powers. The third group includes modern local historians like Nawras and Izz Al-Din, who refer to the writings of the first and second group in their historical narrations, which makes these references an interesting mix of transmitted and innovative ideas.

These remarks reflect the intense study of political issues in conventional historiography; however, in the next section, social and economic history is examined in current historiography. Discussing these issues collectively provides more understanding, since they affect each other strongly. The aim is to achieve the objectives of the alternative method, by highlighting all issues and combining them to understand the specific conditions of this period.

¹¹⁶ Ra'of (ed.), *Tarekh hawadeth Baghdad wal Basrah*, p.5.

¹¹⁷ Izz Al-Din, *Dawud pasha wa nihayat Al-Mamalik*, pp. 12-20.

¹¹⁸ Inalcik & Quataert, *An economic and social history of the Ottoman Empire*, p.674.

¹¹⁹ Nawras, *Hukam Al-Mamalik 1750-1831*.

3.5.2 Economic and Social History of Baghdad between 1750 and 1831

Economic, social and religious issues in the history of Baghdad are less stated in conventional historiographies compared with political issues. In addition, there is an increasing interest in investigating social and economic factors in history, yet the limited material that explores these issues is overshadowed by conventional methods that seek mere statistics, and concentrates on the physical settings and conflicts of a remote past. The principles of the alternative method in this thesis stress the importance of time continuity, and view the city's history and all elements that influence this history as a whole solid component that belongs to a whole unit of time. Therefore, the examination of these matters in this section understands dynamic components that are attached to present and future times, in addition to the past.

Among the key significant criterion of Baghdad that had a great impact on its history is its central strategic location which played a paramount role in its commercial viability and its demographic growth. Throughout history, it has been considered an inland port ethnically different from other ports, and also differently constituted in its economic life¹²⁰. The significant role of Baghdad as a central trading place in the whole region is widely noted in the remarks by European travellers. For example, Alexander states in the early nineteenth century traders of every minority in the area, from Anatolia, Persia, Syria, and the seaports of the gulf were "all halting at Baghdad"¹²¹. However, other issues connected to the significant location, such as being a central station for the Hajj caravans, increased its significance and vitality, and being a place of inward and outward migration is rarely mentioned in conventional sources. This location continued to act as a guarantor of its survival in the face of recurring disasters, however, the central position brought bad luck occasionally. Because of its strategic location and its function as a caravan terminal, Baghdad was among the most unlucky cities of the Ottoman Empire with respect to epidemic diseases.

In late eighteenth century Iraqi cities, including Baghdad, exported large quantities of dates, yet this trade was repeatedly interrupted because of the raids by the Wahhabi tribal group, which reduced the trade protection of local tribes¹²². The safety issue did not only affect trade activities; it affected Hajj caravans that embarked in Baghdad, and it restricted the movement and immigration to the city. Longrigg calls the Wahhabi movement 'the new enemy on the Iraq fringes'¹²³. Among the tragedies that dominated the series of disasters in conventional historiography is the constant and regular overflowing of the Tigris River. These floods caused a lot of damage to architectural and urban structures. Although considered a natural disaster, careless attitudes and the lack of good policies to control the flooding led to these conditions. Consequently, these historiographical sources present the river as a source of calamity and adversity, while poems and prose present the river as a source of beauty, relief and happiness.

Another issue in particular that dominated the atmosphere of eighteenth century historiography is the events of severe plague, which was the major cause for a sudden drop in

¹²⁰ Inalcik & Quataert, *An economic and social history of the Ottoman Empire*, p.706.

¹²¹ Alexander, CM 1928, *Baghdad in bygone days: from the journals and correspondence of Claudius Rich, traveller, artist, linguist, antiquary and British resident at Baghdad, 1808-1821*, 1st edn, J. Murray, London, p.31.

¹²² Inalcik & Quataert, *An economic and social history of the Ottoman Empire*, p. 733.

¹²³ Longrigg, *Four centuries of modern Iraq*, p.213.

population. Like most Ottoman cities of its time, Baghdad saw its population constantly fluctuate over the course of the century. This population represented a mixture of religions, cultures and races. Consequently, the city lost a large proportion of its population, including scholars, prominent poets, and skilled craftsmen. Historians narrate that in 1773 an epidemic killed two-thirds of Baghdad's people¹²⁴. Inalcik estimates the population of Baghdad at the end of the eighteenth century was 80,000¹²⁵. The twin calamities of plague and famine changed the demographic map of Baghdad dramatically¹²⁶, and contributed to a great and permanent loss of craftsmanship. In addition to floods and epidemics, Baghdad suffered from the continuous wars between Ottomans and Persians, resulting in a number of painful sieges, instability, and damage. The frequent hostilities between the Ottomans and the Persians cast a constant shadow over the security of the city and other frontier areas. One of the most negative impacts of those continuous fights was famine, which is believed to have killed most inhabitants in the sieges of Baghdad in the eighteenth century¹²⁷. Moreover, the city suffered from tribal raids and constant political mayhem, which added to its tragic image.

In conventional historiography, this disastrous situation is always compared with the earlier city of the Abbasids, to prove why under the Ottoman rule Baghdad never regained its previous role as one of the most important hubs of knowledge and trade. However, the reverse immigration during the eighteenth century that took place despite recurrent disasters is rarely mentioned in conventional sources as a positive criterion of this period. In addition to the great number of people who were brought from Georgia in the eighteenth century, people immigrated to Baghdad from the surrounding areas for a relatively better life and education. The biggest numbers of immigrants came from Najd, because of the Wahhabi troubles in the late eighteenth century. In addition, the immigration from Persia to Baghdad, outlined in the previous section took place in the early decades of the eighteenth century, because of the deteriorating political situation in the immigrants' homeland.

Historians suggest different reasons for the immigration from Najd. For example, Abdullah states that entire tribes were forced to move out of Najd "in search of water and forage"¹²⁸. He mentions the great loss in population in the late eighteenth century and states "large migrations from Arabia along with the continued low urbanisation allowed the tribes to constitute the great majority of the people in the province of Baghdad and Basra"¹²⁹. On the other hand, Fattah relates this immigration to the Wahhabi movement; "many defeated anti Wahhabi tribes were forced to move out of their traditional pastures and to head for Iraq in order to regroup their forces and start anew"¹³⁰. Regardless of the cause of the immigration, there is no doubt those reverse immigrations had huge impacts on the city's development and continuity.

It is important to explore the main religious movements that took place in late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, because they affected social life, politics, and the history of the city. Khoury asserts the Wahhabi movement "was from its inception a political movement"¹³¹,

¹²⁴ Inalcik & Quataert, *An economic and social history of the Ottoman Empire*, p.651.

¹²⁵ Inalcik & Quataert, *An economic and social history of the Ottoman Empire*, p.654.

¹²⁶ Longrigg, *Four centuries of modern Iraq*, pp. 93-94.

¹²⁷ Inalcik & Quataert, *An economic and social history of the Ottoman Empire*, p.651.

¹²⁸ Abdullah, *Merchants, mamluks, and murder*, p.35.

¹²⁹ Abdullah, *Merchants, mamluks, and murder*, p.34.

¹³⁰ Fattah, HM 1997, *The politics of regional trade in Iraq, Arabia, and the Gulf, 1745-1900*, State University of New York Press, Albany, NY, p.29.

¹³¹ Khoury, 'Who is a true Muslim', p.259.

as this group “chose to rebel and attempt to overturn the system by violence”¹³². This movement was led by Muhammed ibn Abdul-Wahab, who called upon the people of Najd to follow his doctrine in 1730¹³³. The Wahhabi movement was based in Najd, but their raids on Iraqi cities had great impacts on the social aspects in Baghdad including stability, safety, wealth and demography.

The Wahhabi movement was not the only religious movement that influenced the history Baghdad. There was another major movement in the eighteenth century in Baghdad, “the Khalidiyya branch of Mujaddidiyya/ Naqshabandiyya mystical order”¹³⁴ which emerged in (1778-1822) and was led by Khalid Al-Naqshabandi¹³⁵. This movement is a division of *Sufism*, which was penetrating deeply in the society since the emergence of Al-Qadiriyya and Al-Rifaiyya orders in the twelfth century. Unlike the political leanings of the Wahhabis, philosophical manners constituted the main ideas of these orders, however, Khoury notes that Khalidiyya order took a political character in 1811 by offering “an urban reformed *Sufism* that appealed to a powerful scholar/ mercantile elite in Baghdad”¹³⁶. It appears *Sufism* was effective on the society of Baghdad at that that time. Izz Al-Din writes when Dawud *pasha* was appointed as a governor of Baghdad he wanted to be close to people's hearts so he decided to be close to the *Sufi* leaders and paid them thirty thousand liras¹³⁷. Unlike issues related to the governor, fights and disasters, the consequences of these social and religious movements on the urban history of Baghdad are infrequently indicated in conventional historiography, which requires more openness and more emphasis on the interlocking visions in history representation.

Apart from conflicts and epidemics, the Iraqi historian Ra'of suggests the second half of the eighteenth century saw distinct beginnings in a number of new technologies. These changes were reflected on both social and urban levels, as Iraq witnessed a rapid increase in the local industry for export, and a rapid growth of population in major cities. Baghdad experienced improvements in transportation, and an increase in the construction of public facilities like stations, khans and bridges. Another achievement of this change is the initiation of new organisations that enhanced social ties, especially between merchants and craftsmen¹³⁸. It appears these improvements continued to influence social life in Baghdad in the early decades of the nineteenth century. Izz Al-Din states in this period Baghdad witnessed an increase in the number of scholars, and became a famous religious and scientific centre¹³⁹. As a result, many schools and bookshops were established in Baghdad and other cities of Iraq, and cultural fora grew rapidly, while Baghdad continued to attract knowledgeable people from different cities in the region.

Ra'of suggests many scholars produced significant works in subjects such as medicine, mathematics and morphology¹⁴⁰. This period witnessed growing activities in literature, and history took a greater share compared with other disciplines. Although scholars often followed traditional methods in writing, the literature composed during that period

¹³² Khoury, 'Who is a true Muslim', p.266.

¹³³ Al-Ghadeer Centre for Islamic Studies 1995, *The Wahabia movement: The true image*, Al-Ghadeer Publications, Beirut, Lebanon, p. 7.

¹³⁴ Khoury, 'Who is a true Muslim', p.259.

¹³⁵ Al-Warid, *Hawadeth Baghdad fi 12 qarn*, p.237.

¹³⁶ Khoury, 'Who is a true Muslim', p.267.

¹³⁷ Izz Al-Din, *Dawud pasha wa nihayat Al-Mamalik*, p. 49.

¹³⁸ Ra'of (ed.), *Tarekh hawadeth Baghdad wal Basrah*, p.5.

¹³⁹ Izz Al-Din, *Dawud pasha wa nihayat Al-Mamalik*, p. 20.

¹⁴⁰ Ra'of (ed.), *Tarekh hawadeth Baghdad wal Basrah*, p.6.

encompassed new and clever ideas. Scholars were also interested in poetic expressions even in scientific subjects. Yet, regardless of the specific interest of each scholar, religious studies were a collective practice. These advancements in knowledge and educational conditions and the increasing number of scholars in Baghdad are only briefly represented in conventional historiography. Instead, technological developments and the related outcomes are heavily emphasised. This clarifies the urgent need to implement the alternative method that favours the benefit of the city over other aims, while representing the city's urban history. As this study is concerned with architectural and urban history more than other subjects, the next two sections discuss the urban development in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, to understand the circumstances that influenced the city's urbanism from those centuries until the present.

3.5.3 The Cityscape of Baghdad

The remarkable feature of almost all available references in conventional historiography is the particular avoidance of reading urban change through architectural and urban development in the eighteenth century. This avoidance suggests the insignificance of these issues in the attitudes of writers of this period, since the architecture of this period is viewed as an historical and traditional aspect that belongs to the past only. The study of Baghdad's cityscape in the second half of the eighteenth century brings up different challenges to the researcher. Unlike the wide studies on Baghdad of the Abbasids, the eighteenth century's image continues to be gloomy and miserable. On the other hand, a unique aristocratic imagery of the palaces of Ottomans, and distinctive descriptions of the law and order of Ottoman towns, are continually reflected in literature and in art. This study searches for a clearer image that stands firm against the conflicts and complexities of historiography. The search ponders the specific components of place and the varied principles in conceiving these attitudes. This research is necessary to increase the appreciation and understanding of the many ways in which the city was seen by people who lived in it.

Historical narratives in relation to the cityscape and architecture of Baghdad can be classified into three groups, according to the method of interpreting the forms of the city. On one hand, travellers like Niebuhr, Olivier, and Buckingham describe the city as they approach it from outside. These narrations usually view the city as forms, spaces, layouts and history with less interrogation of inner meanings. On the other hand, modern architectural historians like Bianca, Jawad, and Fethi interpret the city as a collective representation of various systems, such as public and administrative systems, housing schemes, street networks and irrigation systems. The third group of local historians like Ra'of, Abadah, and Al-Alusi, observe the city as comprised of individual buildings that have a unique history. Thus, their writings combine history with the physical features, and present an emotional reading of place. However, an overall reading of those sources informs the imagery of the city from different angles, and supports the goals of the alternative method.

To understand the study of the cityscape of Baghdad in the eighteenth and nineteenth century, a study of the major effective components of the city is implemented in this section, while specific architectural details are examined in the next section. The central location of Baghdad increased its magnitude as a cultural mediator between northern and southern parts of Iraq¹⁴¹. During the eighteenth century, the city constituted two parts on each side of the

¹⁴¹ Makkiyya, *Baghdad*, p.282.

Tigris River; the western part (Karkh) and the eastern part (Rusafa). The Tigris River, which passes through Baghdad and contributes to the formation of the two parts, has been a major collective symbol of the city's historical events. Each part contained a number of quarters called *qasabat*, which emerged with the rapid demographic increase. The population of each part was not equal. Rusafa constituted the largest number of residents as it was more secured and fortified, and it was also the hub for successive governments for more than eight centuries. However, in the late eighteenth century, the population in Karkh started to grow faster because of the complex political situation that forced people to move from Rusafa to Karkh, where there was more openness and less political tension.

The main connection between the two parts of Baghdad at that time was a bridge of 34 small boats tied together with three chains¹⁴² (Figure 10). The length of the bridge was estimated by some travellers as 600-620 feet (182-188 metres)¹⁴³. This bridge continued to service the people of Baghdad until 1939 when a concrete bridge was constructed. The new bridge is called now *Shuhadaa'* Bridge (Martyrs Bridge). In the late eighteenth century, Rusafa was enclosed by a defence wall from all sides. The river's edge was mostly confined to particular public buildings like citadels, administrative offices, military barracks, schools and mosques. Those buildings were often constructed to capitalise on the river's spatial qualities, a practice that began in the Abbasid period and continued for centuries. Inalcik states an unparalleled program of fortress building gave perfect architectural expression to a more defensive outlook upon the world¹⁴⁴.



Figure 10: The bridge of Baghdad [Al-Warrak 2007]

Conventional historiography refers to Rusafa as Baghdad, and many sources consider this part as the only component Baghdad, particularly because it was fully walled and contained the government offices. However, old maps of Baghdad indicate that the city had had two parts since the Abbasid period. The map of Iraq by Ibn Hawqal, and the map of Baghdad by Nasuh Al-Matrakci in the sixteenth century are evident, as they are showing the two parts of Baghdad clearly (Figure 11). It worth noting the fortified eastern part of Baghdad was not

¹⁴² Niebuhr, C & Heron, R 1792, *Travels through Arabia and other countries in the East*, R. Morison and Son, Edinburgh.

¹⁴³ Al-Warrak 2007, *Baghdad bi-aqlam rahhala* (translation), Al-Warrak Publishing Ltd, London.

¹⁴⁴ Inalcik & Quataert, *An economic and social history of the Ottoman Empire*, p.639.

fully occupied in the eighteenth century; it contained a large area that was not occupied, but it was full of farms and orchards¹⁴⁵. On the other hand, the western side of the river expanded rapidly at that time, which indicates the impact of social, natural and political conditions on urban density. This matter will be discussed in depth in Chapter Five of this thesis.

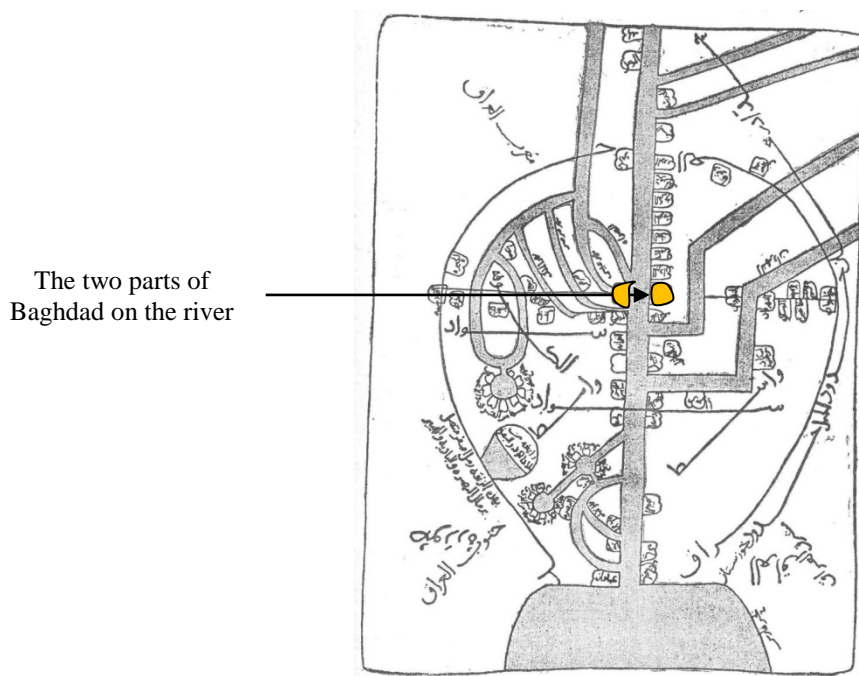


Figure11: A map of Iraq by Ibn Hawqal in the tenth century showing the central position of the Tigris River, and outlining the two parts of Baghdad [Jawad & Susa 1958]

The issues related to the wall of Baghdad incorporate historical events that are valuable to this study, since they explain different and mixed attitudes in historiography. Historians, such as Abadah, consider the history of the building of Baghdad wall as mysterious, because very little is known about the details of its construction and maintenance¹⁴⁶. Both Jawad and Bianca indicate that the building of the city wall was launched during the Seljuk rule 1052-1187¹⁴⁷. However, Jawad suggests that the fortification work started about a hundred years earlier in 488/1095, and the Abbasids resumed the construction of the wall in 517/1123. The wall collapsed in 554/1159 due to a flood, so the caliph ordered the building of additional supporting walls¹⁴⁸.

These different opinions about the starting date of the construction of Baghdad wall demonstrate a typical practice in historiography. However, the destruction of the wall that had a great impact on the urban history of the city is not very evident in the historical studies

¹⁴⁵ For more details see Niebuhr & Heron 1792, *Travels through Arabia and other countries in the East*. Also see Ra'of, *Ma'alem Baghdad fil-quroon Al-Muta'akhira*. Also see Jawad & Susa, *Dalil kharitat Baghdad Al-Mufasssal*.

¹⁴⁶ Ra'of, *Al-Iqd Al-Lami' bi athar Baghdad wal masajed wal jawame'*, p.103.

¹⁴⁷ Jawad, Susa, Makkiyya & Ma'ruf, *Baghdad*, p.250.

¹⁴⁸ Jawad & Susa, *Dalil kharitat Baghdad Al-Mufasssal*.

on Baghdad. Despite recurrent floods that caused a great damage to the wall, it survived and maintained the same layout, which was tightly contained within this wall for eight centuries of its development¹⁴⁹. Therefore, this wall became momentous with time (Figure 12). The fortified city of Baghdad was approached through five gates: Al-Bab Al-Sharqi, Al-Bab Al-Wastani or Bab Al-Dhufriyya, Bab Al-Tillism (Talisman Gate), Bab Al-Mu'addam and the river's gate. Each gate had specific characteristics, and they all have a particular historical significance. Historians note the will to maintain the wall in late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Khulusi notes in the eighteenth century the wall and gates were renovated many times to strengthen the defence line of the city¹⁵⁰. In addition, the western part of Baghdad (Karkh) was also fortified towards the end of this century, during the rule of Suleyman *Al-kabeer* (the old). In early nineteenth century Abadah states the wall was substantially fixed after each flood or siege¹⁵¹.

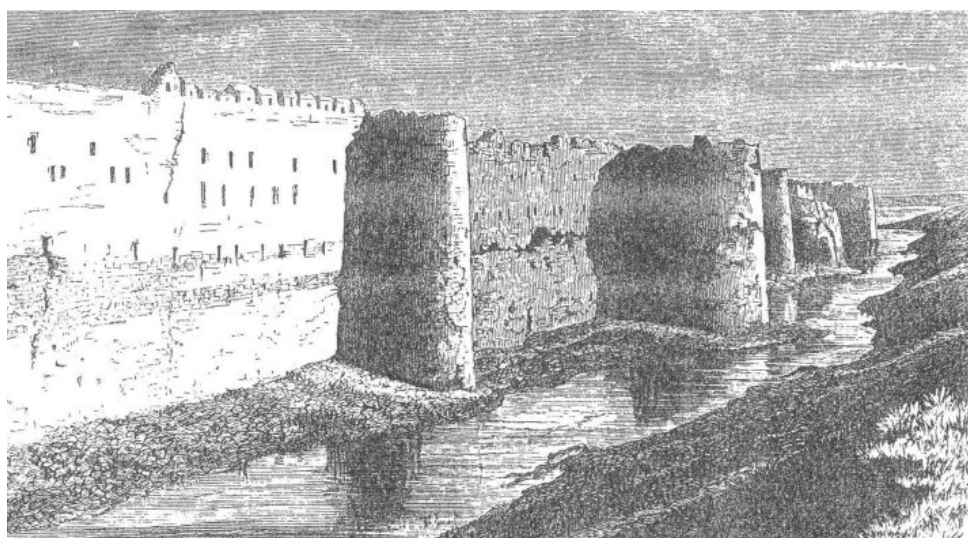


Figure12: The wall of Baghdad [Fogg 1985]

From 1869, Bianca notes the Ottoman administration under Midhat *pasha* started modernising the city by tearing down the old city walls and constructing residential extensions¹⁵². On the other hand, Ghaidan suggests another reason for demolishing the wall other than ‘modernity’: in 1870, with the purpose of adding a second story to the Qushla barracks¹⁵³, Midhat *pasha* “demolished a section of the early 11th century wall surrounding Baghdad to provide the building materials for the project”¹⁵⁴. Nevertheless, this deliberate demolition of the wall resulted in a permanent change of the historic city layout. Further, the destruction of the walls of Baghdad “left giant rubbish heaps and a defenceless town”¹⁵⁵. Despite these attitudes, conventional historiography holds an exceptional focus on Midhat

¹⁴⁹ Bianca, *Urban form in the Arab world*, p.250.

¹⁵⁰ Khulusi, *Tarekh Baghdad or Hadeqat Al-Zawra' fi Sirat Al-Wuzara'*, p. 31.

¹⁵¹ Ra'of, *Al-Iqd Al-Lami' bi athar Baghdad wal masajed wal jawame'*, p.238.

¹⁵² Bianca, *Urban form in the Arab world: past and present*, p.250.

¹⁵³ The identification of *qushla* is on pp. 82-83.

¹⁵⁴ Ghaidan U 2008, ‘Damage to Iraqi’s wider heritage’, in Stone, PG, Farchakh, J & Fisk, R (eds), *The destruction of cultural heritage in Iraq*, The heritage matters series, vol. 1, Boydell Press, Woodbridge, Suffolk, p. 86.

¹⁵⁵ Longrigg, *Four centuries of modern Iraq*, p.299.

pasha's achievements more than any other Ottoman governors, and highlights his efforts to 'modernise' the city.

Still, two gates of this wall survived during this destruction, Al-Bab Al-Wastani and Bab Al-Tillism. The first gate, Al-Bab Al-Wastani is the only gate of Baghdad that has survived until present (Figure 13). The second gate, Bab Al-Tillism, had a remarkable historical significance (Figure 14). It was built through the Abbasids' time in 622/1225, and it had a unique ornamentation of snakes (Figure 15). Abadah states this historic gate was bombed in 1917 by the Ottomans, because they used it to store great amounts of weapons and gunpowder¹⁵⁶, which points out the casual treatment of the city's irreplaceable components. Ghaidan asserts there had been cases of destruction in Baghdad during wars and disasters, but breaking down the city's protective wall in peace time is "an unmistakable act of cultural vandalism"¹⁵⁷.



Figure 13: Al-Bab Al-Wastani [Jawad 1968]

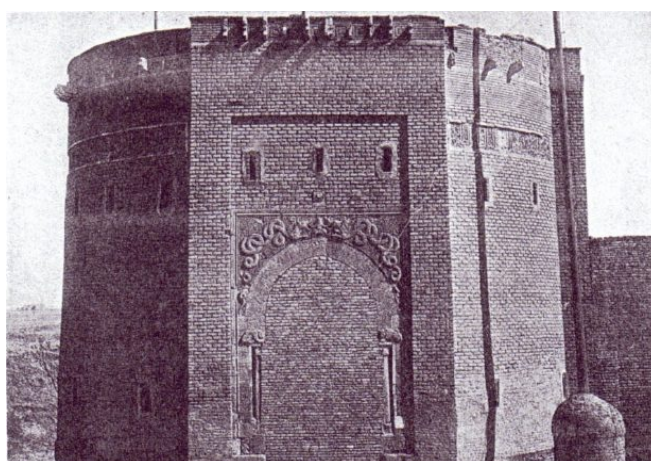


Figure 14: Bab Al-Tillism or Talisman Gate [Coke 1927]

¹⁵⁶ Ra'of, *Al-Iqd Al-Lami' bi athar Baghdad wal masajed wal jawame'* (Arabic), pp.302-303.

¹⁵⁷ Ghaidan, 'Damage to Iraqi's wider heritage', p. 86.



Figure15: A detailed decoration with brick on Talisman Gate [Jawad 1968]

Anyone who approaches the city of this period finds almost the same components of the adjacent cities at that time. However, the image of the city compared to other cities such as Damascus is indicated as less appealing in the travelogues. The city is reflected differently in different writings. For example, travellers' literature of eighteenth century Baghdad illustrates a gloomy cityscape that "offers fewer objects of interest"¹⁵⁸. On the other hand, images in poetry and literature present a happy and beautiful city atmosphere. Undoubtedly, the material aspects of the city did not match the characteristics of the Abbasids' Baghdad, yet it is unrealistic for a city that experienced such recurrent disasters to be in a good shape. Izz Al-Din provides another explanation of the unappealing image. He notes people were not determined to renovate their houses, as an attractive new appearance draws the attention of burglars or the *wali* who have the power to seize their houses and make them homeless¹⁵⁹. These remarks reflect the strong connections between prosperity and safety, and suggest the need for a broader vision to assist the understanding of the city's history.

Nonetheless, the image drawn by conventional studies of the eighteenth century Baghdad is unpleasant, as it pictures demolished mosques and narrow walkways lined with old houses; however, the city has a better image in the nineteenth century¹⁶⁰. Inalcik proposes the gloomy picture of the eighteenth century was because the Ottomans were "increasingly unable to meet the challenges of the later decades of the eighteenth century"¹⁶¹. Yet Cooperson links this dark image with political reasons, since "British colonialists and Iraqi nationalists alike praised their own achievements by describing the Ottoman period as one of decline"¹⁶². On the other hand, the historical narratives and poetry that are examined in Chapter Five of this thesis draw an outstanding picture of the city in this period. This situation suggests the

¹⁵⁸ Buckingham, JS 1827, *Travels in Mesopotamia*, Henry Colburn, London, p.373.

¹⁵⁹ Izz Al-Din, *Dawud pasha wa nihayat Al-Mamalik*, p. 35.

¹⁶⁰ See Murphey R 2007, *Studies on Ottoman society and culture, 16th-18th centuries*, Burlington, VT, Ashgate. Also see Pieri C 2006 'Baghdad architecture, 1921-1958: reflections on history as a strategy of vigilance', in *Bulletin of the Royal Institute for Inter-faith Studies*, vol. 8, Ma'had Al-Malaki lil-dirasat Al-Diniyah, Amman.

¹⁶¹ Inalcik, *An economic and social history of the Ottoman Empire*, p.642.

¹⁶² Cooperson, 'Baghdad in rhetoric and narrative' p. 111.

perception of beauty is not a fixed factor; it is dependent on the vision of individual writers, their knowledge, their intentions and their psychological approach. These aspects establish the impression of things, yet these impressions cannot be perceived as fixed images since they are influenced by changing factors. Thus, both happy and gloomy pictures are possible suppositions, but if they are dealt with in an integrated manner, the picture of the city becomes more comprehensive.

The study of the cityscape of Baghdad in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries reveals the inconsistency of historical material and the uncertainty of the methods utilised to present historical information regarding the city's main features, the Tigris River and bridge, the two parts of Karkh and Rusafa, the wall, and the whole image of the city. The discovery of these issues in connection to specific historical buildings is outlined in the next section.

3.5.4 Architectural and Urban Components of the City

This section observes some architectural and urban components of Baghdad -in the eighteenth- century that are depicted in the available historical material. In general, the urban fabric of the eighteenth century Baghdad is the typical traditional fabric of many cities in the area. Those features include long and asymmetrical streets, linear markets, mosques, schools, khans, in addition to compact clusters of non-geometrical attached houses centred round courtyards. The houses' complex contains attached houses that are often built to the same heights to maintain domes and minarets as dominant features of the skyline. The architectural components of the city can be classified into three groups: the housing complex, the social public complex, and the government official complex. This arrangement considers the specific purpose of each group, and the specific influence on the city's history. During the eighteenth century, houses were built of one storey (Figure 16), and multi-storey houses started to appear in the nineteenth century, with extensive ornamentation and decorations¹⁶³. The unique architectural and urban forms inherited from the nineteenth century are appreciated, and considered important parts of traditional Baghdadi heritage.

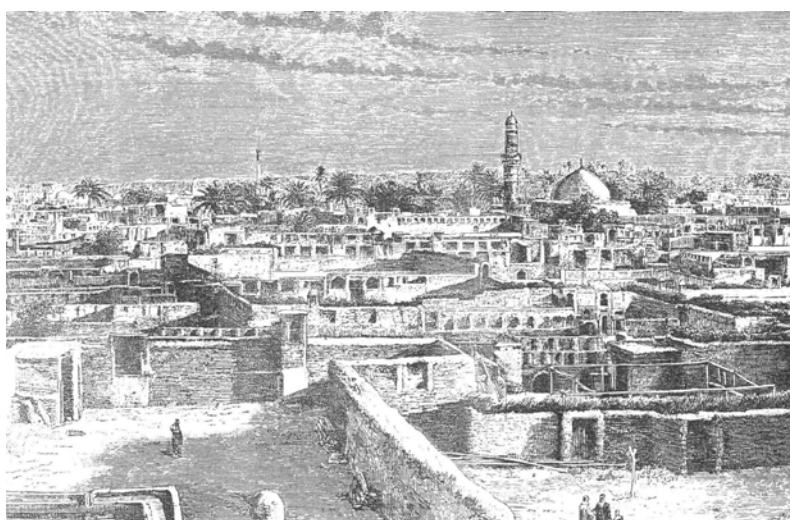


Figure16: A quarter in eighteenth century Baghdad [Jawad 1968]

¹⁶³ Ra'of (ed.), *Akhbaar Baghdad wa ma jawaraha min albilad*, p. 122.

The special techniques devised to fulfil social requirements and the brilliant solutions for inconsistent weather conditions, made this architecture one of the most successful experiences in Baghdad's history of urbanism (Figures 17). This style continued to inspire architects and builders until today (Figures 18, 19). However, there is another feature in these houses that is overlooked in conventional sources apart from physical models. This feature is the multiple uses of houses, since many houses were venues for regular cultural fora that were held in a specific part of the house, despite the ultimately private settings of these houses. In addition, the houses of famous scholars enclosed a particular room for their book collection. These examples indicate the multi-functionality of these houses, and the social activities that sustained them and integrated them in the society.

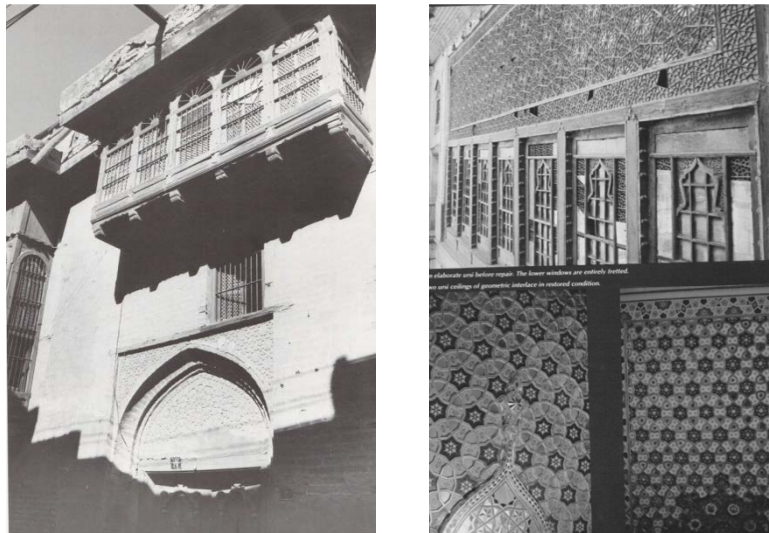


Figure17: Exterior and interior typologies of 19th century houses [Warren & Fethi 1982]

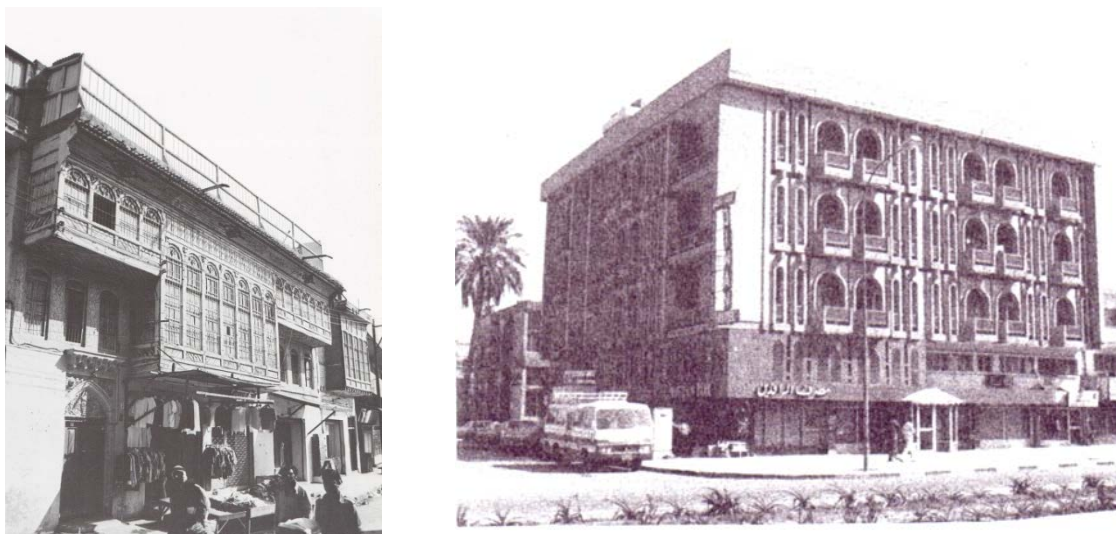


Figure18: A typical Baghdadi house of the 19th century [Warren & Fethi 1982]

Figure19: A bank in Baghdad designed by Chadirji [Aga Khan 1986]

The city in late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries comprised a great number of mosques and schools, which were built in various times throughout history. Examples of mosques that survived until present are Jami' Al-Wazeer that was built in 1008/1600 and renovated in the eighteenth century, Al-Madrasa Al-Mustansiriyya, a famous old university established during the Abbasid period in 1227/1234¹⁶⁴, and Jami' Al-Asifiyya that was built 1016/1608 on the same place of Dar Al-Qur'an that belongs to Al-Madrasa Al-Mustansiriyya¹⁶⁵. A great number of these mosques and schools were built directly on the edge of the river (Figure 20), which offers security, significance, and proximity to water.

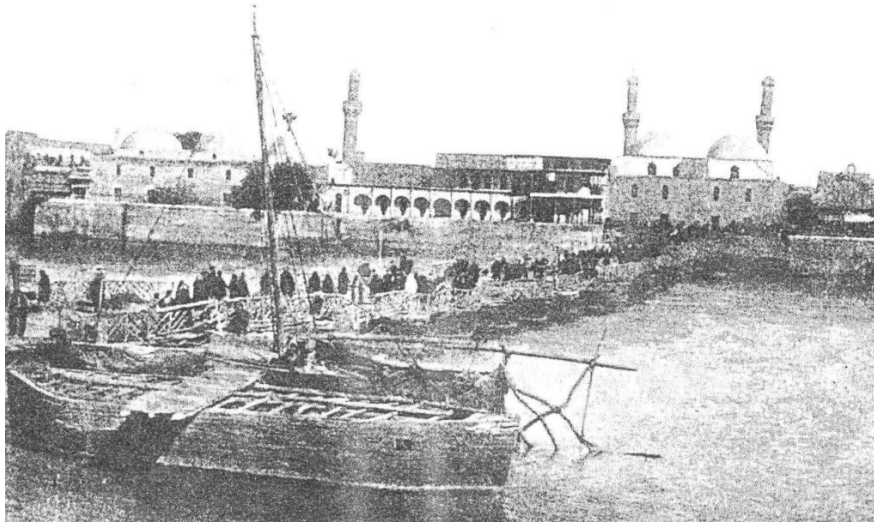


Figure 20: A number of mosques and schools on the river's edge; Jami' Al-Asifiyya at the end of the bridge, Al-Madrasa Al-Mustansiriyya on its right and Jami' Al-Wazeer on its left [Makkiyya 2005]

Due to recurrent floods, many mosques were renovated or re-constructed in the eighteenth century. The Mamluks used the *waqf* financial system to build and renovate those mosques, and the mosque's names usually take the name of the governor or his wife. Examples of those mosques are Jami' Al-Adiliyya, Jami' Al-Ahmadiyya, and Jami' Al-Nu'maniyya. Conventional historiography represents these components as monumental structures, and provides ample information about the building typology, materials, and motifs. Yet literature and poetry designates a specific locus of these forms in the society and history of the city. The mosques are usually associated with shops, which form a net of linear markets that contain numerous mosques, tombs, and coffee shops, in addition to *khans*. These markets were established parallel to the river. They lead to a huge forecourt called Al-Maydan near the citadel by the main gate northern the city and they connect this forecourt to the central market complex near the Al-Madrasa Al-Mustansiriyya in the southern part of the city¹⁶⁶.

¹⁶⁴ Al-Attar, I May 2010, 'Understanding the urban heritage of Baghdad: issues of conservation in the central area', *Proceedings of the first International conference for urban and architectural heritage in Islamic countries*, Saudi Commission for Tourism and Antiquities, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, n. p.

¹⁶⁵ According to Abadah, in the eighteenth century this jami' was occupied by a group of *Sufis* called Mawlawiyya who adopted the idea of '*wahdat alwujud*' that is emphasised in Al-Ghazali's writings. See Ra'of, *Al-Iqd Al-Lami' bi athar Baghdad wal masajed wal jawame'*, p.327.

¹⁶⁶ Bianca, *Urban form in the Arab world*, p. 250.

The markets grew remarkably due to a relative stability in the nineteenth century (Figure 21). Also the specialised linear markets that emerged in the eighth century increased noticeably in the late nineteenth century. Among these specialised markets is the book market located next to the *Saray* and was consequently called Suq Al-Saray, which witnessed the opening of the first bookshop in 1869, and developed into a significant book market later¹⁶⁷. This market is situated in close proximity to the old book market, Suq Al-Warraqueen a book market in the Abbasid era.

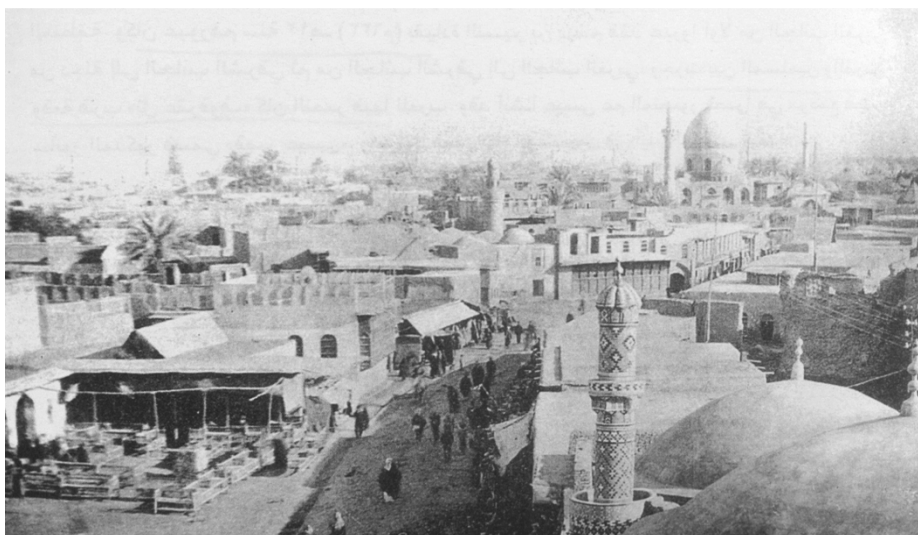


Figure 21: The market road, showing Jami' Al-Ahmadiyya at its end [Makkiyya 2005]

The shops are always connected to the *khans*. These *khans* are usually built in two storeys, and they comprise a number of activities like accommodation, storage, *madrasas*, and shops. Examples of these *khans* are khan Al-Daftardar and Khan Al-Ortama or Khan Mirjan, which is a unique *khan*, built in two stories with a madrasa in the Abbasids' period in 758/1356. In the eighteenth century it was renovated during Suleyman the old time in 1200/1785¹⁶⁸. In addition to schools, mosques, markets, and *khans*, the city of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries contained a number of cemeteries that were usually attached to a tomb of a *Sufi* scholar like Abdul-Qader Al-Gilani (Figure 22) and Omar Al-Sahrawardi.

The distinctive characteristic of this social public complex of structures is the intermingling of different activities that allow multiplicity of usage and connectivity with other urban forms. I believe these interconnectivity characteristics established a strong base for those structures to sustain their existence and influence on the society. Conversely, the other complex of buildings which mainly comprise government offices did not have the same effect on society because of its single distinct activity. The government office complex was called *Saray* or Dar Al-Imarah or Dar Al-Hukum (house of government)¹⁶⁹. Abadah notes this complex was built during the Safavids' time in 1041-1048/1631-1638, and he cites the Turkish traveller Evliya Celebi's remarks; the *Saray* had 200 rooms, a number of *hammams* (public baths) and

¹⁶⁷ Al-Attar, 'Understanding the urban heritage of Baghdad', n. p

¹⁶⁸ Ra'of, *Al-Iqd Al-Lami' bi athar Baghdad wal masajed wal jawame'*, p.368.

¹⁶⁹ Ra'of, *Al-Iqd Al-Lami' bi athar Baghdad wal masajed wal jawame'*.

a garden¹⁷⁰. On the other hand, Ghaidan notes the *Saray* was constructed in 1802, and became the nucleus of the city's administrative centre¹⁷¹. As Mamluks usually tend to renovate rather than establish new buildings, it can be said that the *Saray* was initially built in the seventeenth century, and it was perhaps rebuilt and renovated in the early nineteenth century.

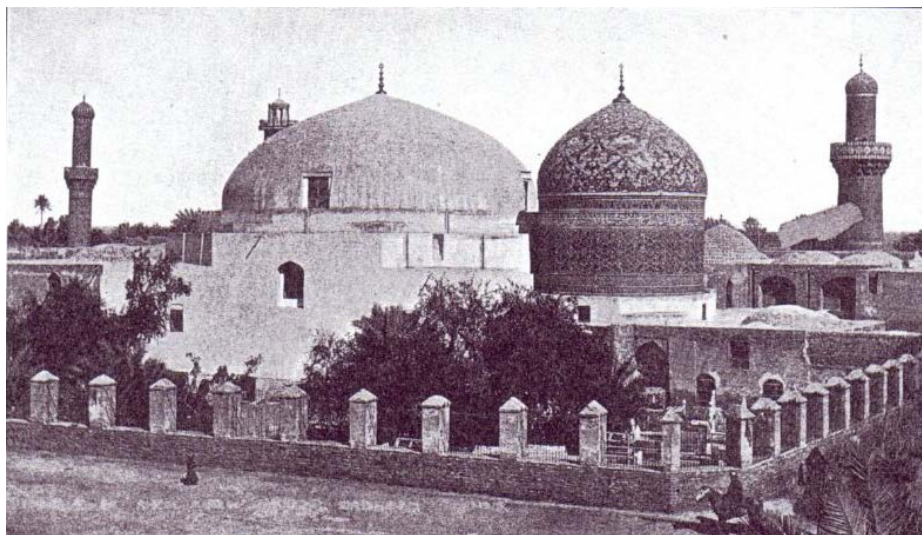


Figure 22: Mosque of Sheikh Al-Gilani [Coke 1927]

Another building in the government complex is the *Qal'aa* (castle), which was built in the fifteenth century, and also renovated in the eighteenth century. This building was established to house the soldiers, yet it had every facility of a small town to serve those soldiers, including houses, markets and coffee shops, in addition to a weapons' storage and a weapons' factory. In early nineteenth century a beautiful garden was established in it¹⁷². Next to the *Saray* area there were the Abbasid Castle and Dar Al-Hikma, which was the biggest library during the Abbasid period¹⁷³. During the eighteenth century, those buildings were turned into castles for the Mamluks, and then these castles were turned into army barracks. In the mid-nineteenth century 1268/1851 a huge rectangular block was built in the same area, called Qushla. In 1268/1869 a clock tower was added to the Qushla building¹⁷⁴, which continues to exist until the present. Resembling a minaret, the Qushla clock tower was the first clock tower in Baghdad (Figure 23). It was built with stones brought from the demolished eastern part of the city's heritage wall¹⁷⁵.

¹⁷⁰ Ra'of, *Al-Iqd Al-Lami' bi athar Baghdad wal masajed wal jawame'*, p.263.

¹⁷¹ Ghaidan, 'Damage to Iraqi's wider heritage', p. 86.

¹⁷² Ra'of, *Al-Iqd Al-Lami' bi athar Baghdad wal masajed wal jawame'*, p.136. Also see Ra'of, *Ma'alem Baghdad fil-quroon Al-Muta'akhira*.

¹⁷³ Ra'of, *Al-Iqd Al-Lami' bi athar Baghdad wal masajed wal jawame'*, p.138.

¹⁷⁴ Ra'of, *Al-Iqd Al-Lami' bi athar Baghdad wal masajed wal jawame'*, p.265. Also see Jawad & Susa, *Dalil kharitat Baghdad Al-Mufasssal*.

¹⁷⁵ Al-Attar, 'Understanding the urban heritage of Baghdad', n.p



Figure 23: Qushla clock tower [<http://mawtani.AI-shorfa.com>]

Although it contained a variety of activities, the government complex did not establish strong connections with society, as these facilities were intended to serve only one group in the society, the military. This lack of the interlocking aspects created barriers to the flourishing and continuity of these facilities. This is evident in the poetry and historical narratives of this period. In addition to the love and beauty of the whole city and the affection for the environment and the river, these narratives focus on both housing and social complexes. Yet the government complex that is always mentioned in conventional methods, is absent in these sources, pointing to the importance of the interlocking aspect, both physically and meaningfully.

3.6 Conclusion

The analysis of the urban morphology of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries Baghdad suggests the interconnectivity and continuity of urban forms regardless of restricted time frames. The demonstration of the conventional methods of historical scholarship of Baghdad unveils how these methods shape the history of Baghdad with a lack of conformity, regularity and continuity. The result is often a mono-layered interpretation that adapts and selects specific ideas to promote its predetermined visions. These transmitted histories written “from a particular viewpoint or perspective”¹⁷⁶ hardly reflect the actual historical events. Additionally, these methods are usually tied strongly to narrow ideologies, personal overviews and anxious psychological reading of history even if they consider more than one element in their reading. With their contradictory images, these methods picture Baghdad as several cities that barely share similarities. The alternative method suggested in this thesis seeks to create means of dealing with these contradictory readings of history; by establishing connections between them, searching for common criteria that can integrate them, and adding other sources to achieve a deeper understanding.

The examination of conventional histories of Baghdad in this chapter classifies these methods into four categories. The first method is the ‘personal or the heroic interpretation’, when the history of the city is totally associated with the history of prominent rulers, military leaders, poets or even a particular group in the society. Examples of this method include the books

¹⁷⁶ Dean, *Critical and effective histories*, p.15.

composed to admire the achievements of the Abbasids, specifically Dawud *pasha* and Hassan *pasha*. The second technique is the 'mythical and imaginative writing' of history which exaggerates historical events, and adjoins inventive ideas that drive it away from scientific integrated methods of history writing. The outstanding description of the round city of Baghdad and the exaggeration of the tragedy of the destruction of Baghdad are some examples of this kind of writing. The third kind of conventional techniques is the 'physical and substantial interpretation' of history. Examples of this type include the writings that focus on the formal shape of the city, building techniques, selective structures like houses, mosques or *khans*, and the detailed specifications of individual buildings. And the fourth type of historical writing of Baghdad is the 'documentary political scheme' that associates the history of the city with specific observations, personal views, and political attitudes. The colonial literature or the traveller's writings are the key examples of this last type of writing.

Although the common aspect of these methods implies honouring the past, this respect is a completely ineffective approach for present and future times. This rejection and the gloomy picture of Baghdad in this period resulted in a major turn in the urban schemes of the early decades of the twentieth century, that is, the 'modern urban system'. The Ottoman administration launched this system in 1908 by initiating a project to widen a road in eastern Baghdad, to allow more space for the carriages, and to connect the administrative centre in the north part of the city with the business centre in the south part of the city. Gaidan suggests another reason for constructing the road. He notes the Ottomans launched this project for the purpose of control, and that the road was renovated in the second decade of the twentieth century in the name of modernisation by the governor of Baghdad¹⁷⁷. This project resulted in great damage to the historical urban form; a number of mosques were partly destroyed and "hundreds of Baghdad's old houses were lost forever"¹⁷⁸.

The new street that was not fully paved was called Jadeed Street (new). Later, in 1916, it took the name Al-Rashid Street. This street was one of three streets that were proposed and constructed gradually, starting from Al-Rashid Street, then Al-Kifah Street in 1936, and ending with Jumhuriya or Al-Khulafa Street in 1956. Those three major roads were built parallel to the river and cut through the historical urban fabric¹⁷⁹. The new system of wide streets fragmented the historic districts and the development of housing with better facilities outside accelerated the process of outward migration from the central area resulting in a dramatic change of the old city layout and function. The new housing typology encompassed unfamiliar models that were not compatible with the specific needs of the place and people, creating new problems and bringing more complexity to the urban history of the city.

This situation shows how causal observations of history result in a fractured history, and confused themes. It also confirms the physical transitoriness and temporality of historical structures, which emphasises the need for the discovery of the circumstances that contributed to their creation. I believe that implementing the alternative method, *infinite interlocking interpretation*, and the three dynamics (advancement, balance and complete vision) assist in achieving a more integrated understanding of urban history, and establish future plans on this basis. The new method promotes flexibility in dealing with history, by appreciating historical forms reasonably, and ensuring a comprehensive understanding that considers both fixed and variable elements. The method acknowledges all approaches collectively and does not favour one over the others. Although the examination of the physical appearance seems to have had

¹⁷⁷ Ghaidan 'Damage to Iraqi's wider heritage', p. 87.

¹⁷⁸ Ghaidan, 'Damage to Iraqi's wider heritage', p. 86.

¹⁷⁹ Bianca, *Urban form in the Arab world*, p. 251.

an unacknowledged effect upon the writing done in or about the city, it should not come last, as suggested by Grabar¹⁸⁰. As an alternative, it should be 'among' other techniques of historiography.

¹⁸⁰ Lassner, *The topography of Baghdad in the early Middle Ages*, pp. 12-13.

4. The Role of Literature in Representing the Urban History of Baghdad

“Texts and architecture have commonality in expressing cultural values and therefore in embodying meaning. They are both products of mental mechanisms standing in between experience and reality”¹

This thesis verifies the effective role of literature as a complement to other sources in historiography. The analysis of literature in this chapter - and in the next two chapters - differentiates the chronological layers of the text to obtain abstract reflections of place. The study introduces two types of literature; poetry and travelogues, as sources of historical understanding. For Baghdadi poets, sensitivity and affection shaped their writings, and dictated their inspirations of the past. Yet for travellers, geography was the material underpinning the knowledge of the past, as well as political affairs and personal interests. The various ideas expressed by both groups help to reconstruct more realistic images of physical and social systems, and increase the understanding of the urban history of the city.

The study juxtaposes the literature and poetry of various writers throughout the history of Baghdad. Through their scholarly works, these writers contribute to the representation and continuity of history, by narrating specific events, and expressing their feelings about different conditions. The aim of this investigation is to apply and validate the alternative method of historiography, the *Infinite Interlocking Interpretation*. This method is utilised to signify the themes of urban history that are partially presented, and sometimes ignored, in conventional historiography. The key objective presented in this analysis is an elaboration of how spatial sensibility is presented in these texts, in relation to various architectural, environmental, social, educational topics, as well as topics about urbanism, which are either misinterpreted or undervalued in numerous conventional sources.

This chapter brings together insights from the poetry collections and historical narratives of a number of poets and scholars. The texts selected from the period prior to the eighteenth century are explored and represented. Although this thesis is focused on the historiography of Baghdad between mid-eighteenth and mid-nineteenth centuries, the investigation of literature prior to this period is crucial to an overall understanding of the history of Baghdad. This technique adheres to the principles of the alternative method, which imply an observation of various periods of history to improve the understanding of the past. The interpretation technique involved comparison between different periods and between various circumstances to achieve the vertical interpretation of texts that recognise their interconnectivity.

¹ Morkoc, *A study of Ottoman narratives on architecture*, p. 18.

In order to recognise the role of literature in representation, this chapter begins with an examination of the history of literature and poetry in Baghdad, followed by an explanation of the urban literature phenomenon. Finally, this chapter clarifies the establishment of a detailed technique which represents certain texts in relation to the new method. The poetry and narratives of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries are examined in the next chapter to allow a broader research. The travelogues of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries are examined in Chapter Six of this thesis.

4.1 Poetry and Literature in Baghdad

“Baghdad ... was a focus of world culture and refinements, where the most distinguished theologians and commentators of Islam ... were to be found, teaching, discussing and writing”²

Historical studies consider Baghdad an administrative focal point in the Islamic world, and “a great centre of theological study, as well as more general learning”³. Baghdad has been home to many famous scholars, who have produced significant intellectual works. While philosophers and theologians debated and discussed scientific matters, poets and writers created some of the greatest works of Arabic literature⁴. In the early centuries of its foundation, Baghdad was unparalleled in the number of bookshops and schools of learning⁵. These schools embodied the city’s sophisticated literature, linguistic, historical, and religious structure. Throughout history, literature and poetry had a high ranking and were sold at extensive markets in Baghdad. Poetry, in particular, is considered ‘the treasure of Arabs’⁶, and the peak of Arabic literature, since it encompasses such a wealth of ideas⁷.

The history of poetry in the Baghdad region goes back to the pre-Islamic era, when poets broadcast their poems in a great market in Arabia called *Suq Ukadh*. When Islam arose, poetry became less popular, as the Qur’an condemned all poets except those who believed in God, performed good deeds and endorsed justice⁸. However, Al-Duri suggests “poetry gained in vitality during early Islamic times, stimulated by the new political and social conditions”⁹. This assumption might have been possible half a century or more after Islam. During the Umayyad and the Abbasid rules, poetic commendations were strongly encouraged. The tragic events of Karbala in 61/680 also motivated scholars and inspired them to write many poems emphasising that terrible event¹⁰. Thus, it can be said that after Islam, poetry took a new direction following Islamic guidelines, yet with poets individually implementing

² Smith, M 1977, *An early mystic of Baghdad: a study of the life and teaching of Harith b. Asad al-Muhasibi*, A.D. 781-A.D. 857, AMS Press, New York, p. 60.

³ Lassner, *The topography of Baghdad in the early Middle Ages*, p. 17.

⁴ Abdullah, *Merchants, mamluks, and murder*, p. 9.

⁵ Ma’ruf, N 2005, ‘Al-Hayat Al-Thaqafiyya fi Baghdad’, in Makkiyya, M (ed.), *Baghdad*, 1st edn, Al-Warrak Publishing Ltd, London, p. 168.

⁶ Al-Khazraji, N 2008, ‘Taqaaseem Al-Qafza Al-Adabiyya fil Alfiyya Al-Thaniya Al-Hijriyya’, *Al-Hewar Al-Mutamaddin*, no. 2156, <<http://www.ahewar.org/debat/show.art.asp?aid=121268#>>

⁷ Al-Khazraji, ‘Taqaaseem Al-Qafza Al-Adabiyya fil Alfiyya Al-Thaniya Al-Hijriyya’.

⁸ The Qur’an describes people who follow poets as erratic, since poets sometimes exaggerate things, and they say things but don’t actually accomplish them. Holy Qur’an, chapter 26, verses 224-227.

⁹ Al-Duri, *The historical formation of the Arab nation*, p. 88.

¹⁰ In 61/680 Imam Hussein ibn Ali, the grandson of the Prophet Mohammed was martyred with his family and companions in Karbala, about 110 km south of Baghdad.

these principles governed by a determination to follow the rules, in addition to other circumstances.

On the other hand, historical studies became favourable after Islam, because of the constant urge from the Qur'an to uncover past incidents and learn valuable lessons from them. The study of history arose as a major subject first in Medina, and concerned itself with the biography of the Prophet and narratives of the Islamic community. At this stage, historical studies were intermingled with literary and religious texts. However, individual historical books appeared in the ninth century - after two centuries of Islam - to consolidate Islamic events and Prophetic traditions¹¹. Historians state that this period witnessed an 'explosion of writing'¹² in every academic subject. Consequently, historical studies were influenced by other sciences like geography, astronomy, and philosophy, and were prolific from the ninth century onwards, to the extent that some scholars considered history "a product of the Arab-Islamic milieu"¹³.

In Baghdad, history and literature were developed in the eighth century in line with other disciplines such as science, mathematics, chemistry and astronomy. These subjects continued to flourish, as the number of writings increased enormously. Conventional history declares Baghdad's position as a great centre of learning weakened after the Mogul invasion, since inward and outward immigration decreased. Yet inherited texts from this period assert local scholars carried on scientific research, and continued to write attractive literature. The development of new methods in writing is a proof of this endurance. For instance, Al-Alusi specifies some kind of literature other than poetry was developed during this time. These writings are called *maqamat*, which are eloquent rhymed texts that describe different events. This type of writing contains detailed descriptions of events, and comprises a wealth of information about the city and the society. Al-Alusi refers to two exponents of this style in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries: Ibn Al-Saikal Al-Jazeeri (d. 701/1301) and Dhaheer Al-Din Al-Gazaruni Al-Baghdadi (d. 697, 1297)¹⁴.

On the other hand, the fourteenth century was the start of a massive intellectual movement in Baghdad and other cities in Iraq. At the beginning of that century, many scholars, scientists, and historians realised it was important to conserve and maintain the city's great heritage of literature, so they undertook the collection of numerous writings on various subjects. Naji reflects on the fourteenth century as 'the century of great encyclopedias, scientific writings, and famous historical complications'¹⁵. These encyclopedias, or *mawsu'at*, contained huge collections of intellectual writings in different disciplines. Naji brings up examples of significant writings by Iraqis like Muhammad bin Ibrahim Al-Ansari (d.718/1318), Ahmed bin Yahya Al-Amri (d.749/1348), Safey Addin Al-Hilli (d.750/1349), and Nasrullah Ahmed bin Muhammad Al-Tasturi Al-Baghdadi (d.812/1409). These writings dealt with different subjects such as geography, botany, astronomy, history, philology, poetry, and literature. Therefore, it can be assumed that in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, Baghdadi scholars continued to produce more written artifacts.

¹¹ Al-Duri, *The historical formation of the Arab nation*, p. 90.

¹² Cooperson, 'Baghdad in rhetoric and narrative', pp. 99-113.

¹³ Lassner, *The topography of Baghdad in the early Middle Ages*, p. 90.

¹⁴ Al-Alusi, JA1987, *Baghdad fil Shir Al-Arabi: min Tarekhiha wa akhbariha Al-Hadhariyya* (Arabic), Al-Majma' Al-Ilmi Al-Iraqi, Baghdad, p. 150.

¹⁵ Naji, H, 'Simat Al-Ata'a Al-Fikri fil qarn Al-Thamin Al-Hijri' (Arabic), in *Majma' Allugha Al-Arabiyya*, viewed 6 June 2013, < <http://www.majma.org.jo/majma/index.php/2009-02-10-09-36-00/273-63-7.html>>.

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the literature movement in Baghdad was affected by two major changes. First, geographical re-distribution resulted in a multiplicity of learning centres and literary hubs in the regions instead of focusing on Baghdad only. For instance, the city of Hilla, situated a hundred kilometres south of Baghdad, gradually grew to become a celebrated learning hub. Second, the noted change of the language utilised in literature influenced the quality of texts. The increase in Baghdad's population, combined a mix of different nationalities, promoted this change. Instead of considering Arabic the main language for writing, three languages were utilised in different texts; Turkish, Persian, as well as Arabic. Still, a reasonable number of Arabic writings survived this mix, although it was generally focused on prominent people rather than the urban features of the city.

Although scholars continued to write and research in the sixteenth and seventeenth century, writings inherited from these centuries are relatively fewer, due to instability and increasing troubles causing the destruction of some learning schools and mosques. This damage resulted in the loss of a number of these writings or a confusion of the identity of their writers. Shubbar points out that by the mid seventeenth century, scholars like Ali Khan Al-Madani (d.1119/1707) and others, made every effort to collect the prose works and poetry of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and they managed to collect a good proportion of precious writings¹⁶.

Historians state Arabic language and philology studies declined in the period of Ottoman rule. Besides being a period of 'little building activity'¹⁷, they suggest that the Ottoman era contributed to the deterioration of Arabic literature in all Arabic cities under Ottoman control. Accordingly, there was much misuse of language in literature and poetry, due to the enforcement of the Turkish language, which not only triggered the growth of slang languages, but also widened the gap between them and pure Arabic. However, the reader of different texts from various periods of Baghdad's history recognises the intensity of Arabic literature, and the strong commitment to document events and circumstances.

The vast inheritance of poetry had a great effect on methods of thinking and writing, for the reason that poetry encompasses certain scales and measurements that influence both the poet and his poems. In the late eighteenth century, Arabic literature and poetry flourished in Baghdad because of the relative stability due to the decrease in conquests and the increase in population. As a result of this, different writings increased, and more conferences and cultural forums were established to ensure the regrowth and maintenance of the original Arabic language. In addition, the founding of the printing presses contributed to the thriving of literature after a period of loss and misuse. These issues make the search for original writings in pure Arabic a complicated, yet rewarding process for the researcher.

The interpretation of texts of the eighteenth and nineteenth century presents a number of challenges. Although they are seen as "windows through which glimpses of experiential aspects of architecture are seen"¹⁸, the difficulty in dealing with the double meanings of metaphoric expressions in these texts - especially in poems - complicates the interpretation process. Also the limited number of pictorial images from the eighteenth century increases

¹⁶ Shubbar, J 2001, *Adab Al-Taff* (Arabic), Mu'assasat Al-Tarekh, vol. 5, Beirut, p. 9.

<<http://www.m-alhassanain.com/kotob%20hossain/adab%20hosaini/adab%20altaf/index.htm>>.

¹⁷ Ghaidan, 'Damage to Iraqi's wider heritage', p. 85.

¹⁸ Morkoc, *A study of Ottoman narratives on architecture*, p. 139.

the dependence on texts, presenting another challenge to interpretive schemes. Furthermore, in view of the damage which occurred to a great number of books, it is crucial to investigate the originality of these texts that may have been overlapped and combined with time. Regardless, great efforts have been made by many scholars to collect original texts and assign them to their correct authors.

Nadia Al-Baghdadi suggests the reason for the shortage of original books is that people did not give proper care to books and lacked interest in providing multiple copies¹⁹. The study of the eighteenth century shows that the lack of copying was not completely through individual choice; it also related to other social and political circumstances. When conditions improved, presses were established in the Baghdad area, such as the first printing press in Kadhemiyya in 1821²⁰ and the *Dar Al-Salam* press in Baghdad in 1833²¹. The intention to publish books suggests awareness by scholars of the importance of copying books. Yet the inability to achieve this goal completely in the eighteenth century relates to the continuous occurrence of conflicts, inward and outward immigration, the privileging of specific books over others by governors and inadequate attention given to Baghdad compared with other cities in the Ottoman Empire.

In the eighteenth century the cities of Iraq, including Baghdad, are thought to have lost much of their population. Baghdad, at the end of the century, “numbered perhaps 80,000”²². The fluctuations in population also affected the number of scholars. However, the great amount of poetry and literature produced in this period implies that unstable conditions did not stop scholarly activities. Perhaps the harsh situation was a stimulus for more expressive writing. Cooperson points out the great number of Baghdadi scholars who contributed remarkably to the civilisation of the city despite unstable situations. He notes “Baghdadi scholars were so numerous and so eminent that reference to them could continue to support the centre of the world thesis even when the material prosperity and political importance of the city had receded”²³. Unlike deserted monuments or destroyed tributes, intellect is a living structure that can grow and flourish despite ageing and destruction.

In conclusion, the study of the history of literature, poetry and historical studies in Baghdad indicates fluctuating conditions, contingent upon variable conditions. These changes are reflected to a great extent in the intellectual products. However, viewing literary development as a continuous action in history - according to the alternative method - may prevent an episodic or fragmentary perspective that hinders the understanding of these histories. The demonstration of the literary activity in Baghdad throughout its history proves the intensity of writings despite recurrent political problems. The contradictory aspects of Baghdad's presentation in history appear widely in narratives depending on the experience of the writer. This issue necessitates the inclusion of different narratives from various periods in order to elaborate the urban history of Baghdad over time. This inclusion complies with the principles of the alternative method which views time as a complete coherent unit. Before examining

¹⁹ Al-Baghdadi, N 2005, ‘From heaven to dust: metamorphosis of the book in pre-modern Arab culture’, in *The Medieval History Journal*, vol. 8, April, pp. 83-107.

²⁰ Selman, A 2012, ‘Al-Kadhemiyya fi a’maq Al-Tarekh’ (Arabic), *Buratha News Agency*, viewed 6 June 2013, <http://www.burathanews.com/news_article_174457.html>.

²¹ Al-Haidari, Sh 2008, ‘Safahat min Tarekh Al-Kutub wal Kutubiyyeen fi Suq Al-Sarai’ (Arabic), *Al-Mawruth Journal*, vol. 7, viewed 6 June 2013, <<http://www.iraqnla.org/fp/journal7/23.htm>>.

²² Inalcik, *An economic and social history of the Ottoman Empire*, p. 654.

²³ Cooperson, ‘Baghdad in rhetoric and narrative’, pp. 99-113.

the texts of the period prior to the eighteenth century, it is important to highlight the concept of urban literature, and to develop a method for interpreting this kind of literature.

4.2 The Phenomenon of Urban Literature

“Literature is a function of being intellectually preserved and handed down, and therefore brings its hidden history into every age”²⁴.

As stated previously, the purpose of this study is to present literature and poetry as fruitful alternative resources in historiography, since they advance the understanding of specific periods within a particular framework. This thesis implements the analysis of ‘urban literature’, to allow a broader understanding of the urban history of Baghdad. As a populist trend in literature, this notion does not normally occupy a large space in current historiographical studies. Urban literature implies examining specific texts to reveal direct connections between place and social circumstance, which helps to define a specific urban culture. This type of literature is useful to recognise the spatial qualities of particular place, and the interaction between these attributes and the writers. In addition, it recognises the relationships between individuals and society, as “neither the life of an individual nor the history of a society can be understood without understanding both”²⁵.

Cooperson identifies ‘urban literature’ or the particular qualities of literature composed by urban residents as “a distinct phenomenon in the history of Arabic letters”²⁶. He questions the capability of urban literature to draw connections between social circumstances and literary construction, and whether these connections depend on critical definitions of ‘urban culture’ and ‘entertainment literature’ or not²⁷. The analysis of urban literature in this thesis aims to discover the urban qualities of the area in the past rather than investigating the entertaining features of literature. Unlike conventional histories that focus on the major events and political leaders of a society, the investigation of urban literature aims to understand the life of ordinary individuals, which unveils important historical meanings.

Since both poetry and travelogues reveal plentiful clues of the urban history of Baghdad, the study considers both genres as valuable sources of urban literature. The idea of using urban literature in this study does not necessarily mean establishing a division in literature that is concerned with urban investigation only, or limiting the study of urban history to urban criteria. Urban literature is applied in this thesis to allow expansive, broadened meanings; it is utilised to reflect features of the city through literature, covering all aspects of life, and allows more openness to extensive disciplines of knowledge, including architecture and urbanism. The study of urban literature entails an understanding of the ideas embedded in texts. Although these ideas usually exist throughout the whole text, they are, at the same time, concealed in the body of the text, and cannot be accessed with ease.

Because poetry and narratives are composed by a specific group of society (scholars) these representations include direct connection to the particular experiences of these scholars. Understanding these experiences can lead to the understanding of the history of other groups

²⁴ Gadamer, *Truth and method*, p.161.

²⁵ Mills, *The social imagination*, p. 3.

²⁶ Cooperson, ‘Baghdad in rhetoric and narrative’, pp. 99-113

²⁷ Cooperson, ‘Baghdad in rhetoric and narrative’, pp. 99-113

in society, since these scholars have direct links to normal people. The role of scholars as the best educated group was crucial in the history of cities like Baghdad. Besides cultural and educational conditions, they influenced the general condition of society as well. Thus, scholars stand between common people and leaders in history, which makes them an ideal group for interpreting the history of society as a whole. Although narratives and poems are usually written for certain purposes, when it comes to the city, writings become cohesive with expressive words and affectionate language. This immediacy of poetic language helps to broaden the literary sources used to understand the urban history.

In addition to enriching the understanding of the history of a specific place, the examination of urban literature represents a unique case in history in general, since there is an interlocking relationship between literary works and world history. However, extending the capacity of texts to the world implies that they cannot be limited to a specific geography, yet this does not suggest depriving them of their original locality. The capability of literature to be a self-defining source²⁸ is not a barrier to its association with other sources. In addition, this quality cannot limit the role of literature to specific functions such as entertainment or documentation.

4.2.1 Urban Literature and the Language of Writing

The analysis of urban literature involves examining texts of different languages. As outlined in Chapter Two of this thesis, language is a crucial element of expression that affects understanding and perception. The meaning of texts depends on the interpretation of both the outside appearance and the inner meaning of that language. Thus, the examination of urban literature involves knowledge of this language. Once these aspects of language are understood collectively, the overall understanding of texts occurs. I call the language that is interpreted methodically the 'language of appreciation', as understanding denotes appreciation.

As this thesis is involved in the analysis of original Arabic texts, it is important to outline the characteristics of this language. One of the vital features of the Arabic language is its richness through the incorporation of countless words that have diverse and expressive meanings. These qualities make it an ideal poetic language such that "no language on this earth would match it in this character"²⁹. Another major feature of this language is its connection to the Qur'an, which was revealed in Arabic, because no other language had the capacity to convey all the deep meanings that it contained. It is worth mentioning the role of the Qur'an in maintaining the use of Arabic language in poetry and literature, regardless of the problems that were encountered at different times. Al-Khazraji notes that all scholars have great debts to the Qur'an, which promoted learning, revealed the beauty of the language, and sustained the maximum level of language use³⁰.

The understanding of the Qur'an was crucial in early Islamic studies, and this understanding required an excellent knowledge of the Arabic language and its modulation. Consequently, philological studies were initiated at an early stage in Islam "due to the importance of

²⁸ Said, *Beginnings*, p. 300.

²⁹ Said, EW, Suleiman, F & Association of Arab-American University Graduates 1973, *The Arabs today: alternatives for tomorrow*, Forum Associates, Columbus, Ohio, p. 27.

³⁰ Al-Khazraji, 'Taqaaseem Al-Qafza Al-Adabiyya fil alfiyya Al-Thaniya Al-Hijriyya', n.p.

philology to the correct recitation of the Qur'an"³¹. The Arabic language continued to spread with the expansion of Islam, and it transcended 'both regional and tribal considerations'³². According to Al-Duri, grammarians view language from two perspectives: the first regards language as a matter of heritage, and the second sees language in terms of an existing convention and established usage, which necessitates more strictly defined linguistic rules. He states, "Baghdad inherited both of these perspectives"³³.

Since religious studies were essential to every education, scholars usually started their studies by learning the Arabic language and the Qur'an before commencing a study of a specific subject. However, the most outstanding influence of the language of the Qur'an was certainly on poetry. The most fascinating and effective poems usually follow the techniques of the holy book. Among these techniques is the communication procedure of the Qur'an that uses clarity and briefness of speech to convey meaning, avoiding long sentences and excessive words. It also introduces the concept of using dialogue and questioning to explain ideas. A third technique used is avoiding explicit statements in order to leave space for thinking, expecting and estimating³⁴.

The surprise element in writing is one of the most important stimulating tools of the Qur'an; another strong practice of the Qur'an is the method of using opposing words in the same sentence, a method used frequently in poetry and literature in general. Yet the most striking method of Qur'an is the extensive use of metaphors "to help human imagination gain insight into the unseen"³⁵, as well as advancing thoughts and promoting their familiarity. These techniques grant poetry and literature extra qualities that qualify them to be excellent sources for interpreting history. The understanding of the language and techniques of the Qur'an is essential to this study, since it helps to further understand the selected Arabic texts, in order to interpret them accurately and meaningfully.

Scholars suggest investigating the apparent meaning of each word in addition to the hidden meaning. Al-Sagheer explains all words have two linked phenomena; the phonic which refers to their sounds, and the semantic, which refers to their embedded symbolic meaning³⁶. He states the relationship between the word and its meaning is twofold, which means that if a term requires a meaning, the meaning will require a term. However, recognising this dual relationship is not sufficient to reveal the full significance of the word because it refers only to the natural property of the word. He points to another property of words that should be considered: the earned property that changes the meaning with time. This property is important because it has links to the historical and psychological aspects of words³⁷, which are crucial to their interpretation.

The writer Taha Hussein focuses on connecting words to establish meaning; since the examination of individual words does not convey full meaning unless these words are interconnected in a creative way that helps to interpret meaning³⁸. To achieve this

³¹ Al-Duri, *The historical formation of the Arab nation*, p. 88.

³² Al-Duri, *The historical formation of the Arab nation*, p. 46.

³³ Al-Duri, *The historical formation of the Arab nation*, p. 89.

³⁴ Al-Sagheer, MH, 'Tatawwur Al-Bahth Al-Dalali fil Qur'an Al-kareem' (Arabic), Mawsu'at Al-Dirasat Al-Qur'aniyya, pp. 22-24, viewed 6 June 2013, <<http://www.alseraj.net/maktaba/kotob/quran/tatawer/01.html#2>>

³⁵ Akkach, *Cosmology and architecture in premodern Islam*, p. 30.

³⁶ Al-Sagheer, *Tatawwur Al-Bahth Al-Dalali fil Qur'an Al-kareem*, p. 16.

³⁷ Al-Sagheer, *Tatawwur Al-Bahth Al-Dalali fil Qur'an Al-kareem*, p. 21.

³⁸ Al-Sagheer, *Tatawwur Al-Bahth Al-Dalali fil Qur'an Al-kareem*, p. 22.

interconnectivity, Al-Bustani suggests investigating the geometry of texts by examining the stages of construction and the relationships between all parts, to discover various levels of meaning. This method makes it simpler to perceive the whole sense of the text ahead of its parts³⁹. Moreover, Lankarany advises in addition to the text's literal investigation, we should use intellectual judgement, and refer to holy texts to reach a full interpretation⁴⁰. These ideas establish a consistent base for a deeper interpretation of texts.

On the other hand, the language of the travelogues of Baghdad is multiple. While the travelogues of the period up to the eighteenth century were mainly written in Arabic or Turkish, the travelogues of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries are written in various European languages. This thesis analysed both original and interpreted texts, which may involve some change in meaning. However, this study implemented the comparison between texts as a key technique to reveal the inner meaning of these texts. Since the aim of analysing texts in this thesis is to disclose their meaning, the interpretation is concerned with ideas rather than literary interpretation. The understanding of the language of all these texts requires a method of interpretation, which is identified in the next section.

4.2.2 Urban Literature and the Method of Interpretation

“Ultimately, whoever interprets poetry can do it from various points of view. He can proceed in the direction of the history of genres by classifying a particular poem among the models of the same literary genre; he can proceed in the direction of the history of motifs; he can extricate the rhetorical and poetic techniques and demonstrate their connection with the structure of the whole, etc. But he can also take upon himself the original hermeneutic task of explaining what is comprehensible. And in this case also, he can proceed by examining particular instances”⁴¹

Gadamer's statement indicates the important role of literature in general and poetry in particular as a source of historical understanding. Gadamer suggests different techniques of interpretation to achieve this deep understanding, yet he emphasises the hermeneutic task to understand texts. The alternative method in this thesis does not employ single-sided interpretations; it requires more tools to obtain a profound understanding of literature and poetry. This section is concerned with establishing techniques for the interpretation of the two types of urban literature that are investigated in this thesis. Generally, poetry and other inherited historical texts are multi-dimensional, open, and have a capacity for many dialogic interpretations and few documentary interpretations. These texts usually focus on the symbolic significance of place and metaphoric images rather than describing visible figures. Thus, viewing them conventionally raises a question about their capacity to represent 'truth', and their reliability in interpreting history. Poetry in particular, expresses extensive emotional notions such as love and longing, and conveys strong connections to location, people, specific traditions and history. Conversely, travelogues favour visible figures over conceptual metaphoric figures, although both are combined in travelers' writings occasionally.

³⁹ Al-Bustani, M, *Al-Tafseer Al-Binaee lil Qur'an Al-Kareem* (Arabic), viewed 6 June 2013, <<http://www.alseraj.net/a-k/Qran/al-tafseer/01/fehrsl.htm>>.

⁴⁰ Lankarany, M 1949, *Madkhal Al-Tafseer* (Arabic), Markaz Fiqh Al-A'emma Al-Athar, p. 205, viewed 6 June 2013, <<http://www.alseraj.net/maktaba/kotob/quran/Tafsir/Tafsir.html>>.

⁴¹ Gadamer, *Literature and philosophy in dialogue: essays in German literary theory*, p. 153.

Examining these texts collectively includes both mythical and historical aspects as celebrated insights of historical experience. However, these writings encompass contrasting images, and these opposed images complicate their interpretation, which necessitates developing methods and techniques to assess the validity of the interpretation. The alternative method that considers all elements that influence the writing of history puts into practice these two major resources in historiography; literature and poetry for creative interpretation from the inside, and reflective travellers' literature from the outside. The method implements the interpretative measures of the dispossession theory in this comparison⁴². The theory initiates a study of domestic literature and poetry from one side, and visitors' travelogues from the other. The outcome of this examination reveals simple concepts of urban history. A comparative analysis between the concepts of these two sources results in a composite conception of urban history based on observations from both inside and outside. This composite interpretation is linked with conventional interpretations to increase the understanding of history

The possibilities for interpretation are twofold: apparent, or literal, interpretation that considers the overt meaning of texts, and the inner, or unseen, interpretation which searches for the concealed meaning of texts. The outward appearance of a text usually refers to generality, without considering specification, limits and links. This type of interpretation interprets the meaning of single words and the meaning of the whole text, in addition to the comparison between different texts. This type of interpretation can be distinguished as 'horizontal interpretation'. Although it is crucial to understand each word, this horizontal interpretation cannot supplement a full understanding of the interlocking aspects of the historical experience. However, this level of interpretation is necessary as a basis for any interpretation scheme.

The method of interpretation of texts in this thesis considers all levels of historical development of these texts. While it considers the meaning of the whole text, it also focuses on the geometry of texts and the meanings of single words. Gadamer refers to the release of the meanings of words through dialogue: "a word only becomes a word when it breaks and enters into communicative usage"⁴³. The vertical interconnections within texts is emphasised in the interpretation, as well as direct horizontal meanings. The 'vertical interpretation' implies interconnections between texts, the different stages of construction and the comparison between opposed texts. These techniques are the main constructive techniques that will be used in combination in this method of literature interpretation, since the vertical interpretation of different stages of the history of texts reveal valuable ideas that promote historical understanding. Comparison between synchronous texts establishes a simple level of understanding, and combining these simple meanings enables construction of composite multiple meanings that take advantage of the broad usage of words. The analysis of all simple and multiple meanings with other conventional methods develops an advanced level of understanding.

Accordingly, this vertical interpretation reveals selective unobserved issues in Baghdad's historiography, and discusses them in connection to each other, without regard to a specific time or any other limitation, in order to allow more flexibility in the interpretation techniques.

⁴² See Chapter Two for a definition of this theory, p. 30.

⁴³ Gadamer, 'Language and understanding', p 24.

Undoubtedly the communicative usage of texts reveals some hidden meaning, yet the result depends very much on the method of communication. Besides this, it can be realised that original texts comprise full meaning, and less communication does not relate to the strength of the word itself, rather it reflects the lack of modes of complete understanding. In order to develop further techniques as part of the vertical method of interpretation, I suggest the 'thematic approach' that enhances the meaning and assists in the understanding of urban history by analysing literature and poetry through particular themes. This approach is explained in the next section.

4.2.3 Thematic Approach to the Interpretation of Literature and Poetry

This section outlines specific themes that will be investigated in the urban literature of Baghdad in relation to the urban development of the city. The aim is to promote historical understanding by analysing urban literature, which encloses a wealth of ideas and indications of urban life, in the form of metaphorical compositions. The measures of the method of interpretation are applicable to the interpretation of single words and their context, in addition to the whole text. The interpretation of single words and the interpretation of the whole text bring out a general meaning of the text. I call this gradual development from the single meaning of multiple texts to multiple meanings, the 'cumulative approach'. This approach provides a great aid to understanding, yet the reverse approach is also fruitful for this search. This approach starts by developing a theme in line with a noted absence in historiography, and extending the theme to an overall interpretation of multiple texts, and then approaching specific texts and single words which represent this theme. I call this approach a 'thematic approach', which starts with a bigger premise and searches for texts that represent this theme.

Since it frees texts from limited interpretation and provides complex ideas rather than the literal meaning of single words, the thematic approach seems more appropriate for this study. However, the cumulative approach is also employed as part of a twofold interpretation. The suggested themes are centred on some powerful observations that are ignored in conventional historiography. These observations include emotional expressions such as love, attachment, happiness, beauty, grief, and pride. Although they reveal nostalgic expressions, these themes are indicated in literature in relation to many spatial themes.

An overall reading of these texts indicates love as the most compelling motive in the history of Baghdad. The love of a place, and of other people and ideas, is the most powerful and influential matter in life. It dictates human behaviour, perception, interaction with others, and contributes to the formation of history. Further, love dictates all other impressions, such as happiness, beauty and pride. Thus, lovers could be "the ones who represent human behaviour"⁴⁴. These matters are discussed in this thesis in relation to the social conditions and interconnections with urban spaces such as the river, markets, religious and learning places, in addition to private housing.

The method of interpretation in this thesis employs a number of themes that are either misjudged or overlooked in conventional history writings. I have classified these themes into three categories, in reference to the nature of the topics that group them together. The first group is the nostalgic, which comprises themes of love, attachment, beauty, happiness and social relations. The second group comprises spatial themes that relate to particular

⁴⁴ Gadamer, *Literature and philosophy in dialogue*, p. 161.

characteristics of urban and architectural form that are ignored in conventional sources. Finally, the third group constitutes reflective themes that are connected to the observations about place, reflected in travellers' literature throughout different eras.

Nostalgic and spatial themes are examined in the contexts of Baghdadi poetry and literature, because of the strong indications of these significant themes in this literature. However reflective themes are mainly discussed in relation to the travelogues of Baghdad in this thesis, as travel writings reveal significant views on the city. These three themes, nostalgic, spatial and reflective are explored in this chapter and in the next two chapters. However, classifying these themes into three groups does not mean limiting the search to these themes, and does not imply separating them. The aim of classification is to simplify their presentation, while realising their interlocking aspects.

The idea of demarcating the reading of literature and poetry in these themes will help to develop a historiographical method of interpretation that complements both concealed and obvious meanings, and transfers intellectual ideas to practical properties. This interconnection between various contexts represented in the three themes, assists in reconceptualising history through coherent meanings and increases the awareness of this technique in history writing. The method of interpretation is applied in the next section in relation to the urban history of Baghdad prior to the eighteenth century.

4.3 Textual Representation of Baghdad before the 18th Century

This section investigates poetry and narratives composed in different periods starting from the founding of the city and ending with the early eighteenth century. The vertical investigation is employed in the alternative method to enhance the means of interpretation and to establish continuity in historical meanings. The aim is to highlight other aspects of the history of the city that are not stated, or are misrepresented, in conventional historical writings. The interpretation focuses on the thematic approach that was suggested in the previous section as an initial tool for examination that underlines particular qualities of the city. However, the cumulative approach is also utilised to enhance this examination and enrich the meaning.

4.3.1 Spatial Themes: The Round City of Baghdad

The critical analysis of the history of Baghdad in Chapter Three of this thesis outlined an overemphasis of the real characteristics of the round city of Baghdad. This section explores prose composed since the time of the foundation of the round city until it was deserted and ruined over time. This analysis investigates the urban history of the city and compares this investigation to conventional historiography. Unlike conventional history, the prose of the ninth century contains few indications of the prosperous material qualities of the round city. In contrast, this prose reflects social and economic issues. The thematic approach is utilised in this interpretation. However, the representation of the urban history of the round city mainly focuses on spatial themes, since nostalgic and reflective themes were hardly expressed in the poetry of the round city. The fast decline of this city and the negative aspects that accompanied its foundation may explain the reason of the shortage of nostalgic and reflective themes in literature.

Among the situations that are reflected in the poems of that period is that of poverty and unequal distribution of wealth. People were extremely poor, and life was exceedingly expensive. Meanwhile, palaces were built with bolts made from gold and silver and with gardens containing rare plants and amazing features⁴⁵. The famous poet Abul-Atahiyya (d. 213/826), wrote a poem complaining about the rise in prices while tax money was heavily collected.

Who can tell the caliph my continuous advices?
I see the prices for average people are expensive
And job opportunities are few and poverty is increasing
And the orphans and their mothers live in empty houses⁴⁶

These lines show that although the physical structure of the round city was impressive, residents did not enjoy living there because of the economic problems. This poem shows an overlooked spatial quality of this city, presented in the empty houses of the poor. This suggests the existence of two opposite social situations of wealth and poverty in this city, unlike conventional writings that suggest wealth as the only stable condition of that era.

Another poem by Ali Al-Talibi outlines other social problems in the city. The round city experienced a siege in 196/811 that caused damage to some parts of the city. Al-Talibi expresses sympathy with the dramatic consequences of that siege, and he associates these problems with injustice, breakdown in relations between relatives and the negligent attitude of scholars. He declares that the weakening of the city's position resulted from an increase of bad deeds, which shortened the life of the city.

The strong bonds between relatives are cut
And the educated and pious people did not intervene
Thus this destruction is revenge from Allah
For the big sins they committed⁴⁷

This poem reveals another spatial quality represented in the interrelationship between human bonds, the level of education and the intensity of destruction. The lines highlight the great influence of social and cultural matters on the material conditions of the city. On the other hand, conventional writings link the damage of the round city to one cause, the decision of the Abbasids to move the capital of the Islamic state to Samarra in 221/836. This emphasises the need to interpret poetry to disclose more factual aspects of history that do not necessarily relate to political matters.

The gradual moving of residents outside the city changed the physical conditions of the round city dramatically. These changes are depicted in the poem of Omarah bin Akeel bin Bilal Al-

⁴⁵ Al-Alusi, *Baghdad fil shi'r Al-Arabi*, p.77.

⁴⁶ Al-Alusi, *Baghdad fil shi'r Al-Arabi*, p. 95. The Arabic script is as follows:

من مبلغ عني الأما	م نصائحاً متوالية
اني أرى الأسعا	ر أسعار الرعية غالية
وأرى المكاسب نذرة	وأرى الضرورة فاشية
وأرى اليتامى والأرا	مل في البيوت الخالية

⁴⁷ Al-Alusi, *Baghdad fil shi'r Al-Arabi*, p.114. The Arabic script is as follows:

تقطعت الأرحام بين العشائر	وأسلمهم أهل التقى والبصائر
فذاك انتقام الله من خلقه بهم	لما اجتزموه من عظيم الكبائر

Khatafi, who lived in Basra, a city south of Baghdad. He visited Baghdad after the abandoning of the round city. His poem indicates the constantly fluctuating character of Baghdad; the contradictory conditions of prosperity and construction on one side, and damage and destruction on the other. Al-Khatafi expresses little grief about the destruction of the round city, but admires both the physical and religious structures of the city.

There is nothing like Baghdad in both material and spiritual attributes
Yet its conditions are unsteady and keep changing from time to time⁴⁸

These expressions indicate the mixed feelings he experienced on the damaged round city and the flourishing second settlement. The poet relates the changing conditions of Baghdad to both material and spiritual attributes, which suggests an equal influence of these qualities on each other, and on the condition of the city. The analysis of these three poems established a view about the round city that is opposite to its perspective in conventional historiography. While conventional sources emphasise the material splendour of this city, and extend this historical interpretation to the whole city of Baghdad, the literary texts present it as a temporary component of the history of Baghdad that exhibits contrasting notions of privilege and adversity. Actually, these texts reveal more negative issues than positive issues. This shows the significance of social matters in the general understanding of the city, and points out the validity of the suggested method of interpretation in disclosing these meanings.

4.3.2 Nostalgic Themes: the Second Settlement of Baghdad

The second settlement of Baghdad, which is presented vaguely in conventional historiography, evoked greater love and admiration. This was reflected in the literature and poetry of this period. It seems that double standards and contradictory impressions were experienced throughout the early stages of the development of Baghdad. While the city's wonderful attributes were articulated by visitors, residents found it hard to continue living there in the eleventh century. Mounting economic problems and the shortage of funds compelled some residents of Baghdad to travel far away for their livelihoods. Among those people was the poet Ibn Zuraik Al-Baghdadi (d. 420/1029). This poet was born in Baghdad, but because of the insufficiency of basic needs for him and his wife, he decided to travel to Andalusia for a better life. He never returned to Baghdad as he became ill and died in Andalusia. Al-Baghdadi was sad while he was away from the city. He expressed his grief in a poem, stating no other city could substitute for Baghdad and no other people could replace the people of Baghdad.

I left Baghdad and its people aiming to find a similar place
But I realised that I chose something that leads to a complete despair
It is impossible to find a better place! As Baghdad for me is 'the world'
And the residents of Baghdad are 'all of humankind'⁴⁹

⁴⁸ Al-Alusi, *Baghdad fil shi'r Al-Arabi*, p. 22. The Arabic script is as follows:

ما مثل بغداد في الدنيا ولا الدين على قلبها في كل ما حين

⁴⁹ Al-Alusi, *Baghdad fil shi'r Al-Arabi*, p. 23. The Arabic script is as follows:

سافرت أبغي لبغداد وساكنها مثلاً قد اخترت شيئاً دونه الياس
هيهات ! بغداد الدنيا بأجمعها عندي وسكان بغداد هم الناس

These remarks point out the suffering of being away from Baghdad, despite the problems there. They also show that its natural beauty and educational development added to this pain. They suggest, too, that economic hardship was one of the powerful impressions of a place capable of influencing other measures of beauty and happiness. The poet expressed a metaphoric meaning of Baghdad and its people, soon after his departure from the city. He realised that Baghdad is the world for him, and the people of Baghdad represent humankind. These nostalgic expressions suggest relative pleasing conditions, even in difficult times. They also suggest the strong relationship between material and social influences on the overall context of the city in literature.

Among the unique aspects of Baghdad in the tenth and eleventh centuries was the great number of universities and schools that attracted knowledgeable people everywhere, who considered it a merit to visit Baghdad at some stage of their life. The relatively ease of relocation and immigration, and the urgent need for teachers, encouraged many scholars to consider Baghdad home and stay permanently. Yet it seems that the shortage of funds affected their decision to stay dramatically. For example, Al-Ma'arri stayed in Baghdad for a while. He was teaching there, and participating in cultural debates, but experienced a shortage of funds. He wrote poems blaming the treasurer of *Dar Al-ilm* (the science centre) in Baghdad. The lack of supplies forced him to leave Baghdad, sadly. He likened his trip out of Baghdad to the separation of Adam and Eve from paradise, which indicates the huge loss he felt when he left the city, and the excessive beauty of Baghdad that evoked images of paradise in his imagination.

The cause that made me leave Baghdad is the same cause that misled Adam and Eve
And got them down to earth from the grand paradise⁵⁰

Al-Ma'arri wrote another poem expressing his sorrow about leaving and his great attachment to Baghdad and its people, whom he loved and considered as his family.

Oh people of Baghdad, I farewell you
And my entire body keeps stinging and burning from inside due to my sadness
I consider *Sham* [Syria/Levant] and its people the worse substitution for Baghdad and the Baghdadis
However, they continue to be my people and their place remains my homeland
Can you provide me with a sip of water from *Dijla*?
I would gulp all the water of *Dijla* if it was possible⁵¹

This poem indicates extraordinary attachment to Baghdad by a visitor, who expressed much pain of leaving the city, due to economic hardship. However, it seems as though there was a considerable improvement in the economic situation in the late eleventh century, at least for the teaching scholars. The eminent scholar Al-Ghazali arrived at Baghdad in 484/1091 and he commended the financial system in Al-Madrasa Al-Nidhamiyya where he stayed and taught:

⁵⁰ Al-Alusi, *Baghdad fil shi'r Al-Arabi*, p. 123. The Arabic script is as follows:

وماسار بي الا الذي غر آدمًا وحواء حتى أدرك الشرف الهبط

⁵¹ Al-Alusi, *Baghdad fil shi'r Al-Arabi*, p. 121. The Arabic script is as follows:

اودعكم يا أهل بغداد والحشا على زفراء ماينين من اللذع
فبئس البديل الشام منكم وأهله على أنهم قومي وبينهم ربعي
ألا زودوني شربة ولو انني قدرت اذن أفنيت دجلة بالجرع

“The wealth of Iraq was available for good works, since it constitutes a trust fund for the benefit of Muslims. Nowhere in the world have I seen better financial arrangements to assist a scholar to provide for his children”⁵².

The attachment to the city expressed in Al-Ma'arri's poem, and the favouring of it over his homeland, shows how social, cultural, and natural attributes establish attractive places for visitors and residents alike. In addition to expressing love and affection to the city as a whole, Al-Ma'arri indicated particular attachment to the Tigris River and its water. This suggests the significance of some urban forms of the city, such as the river, in the understanding of its history. It also suggests the great benefit of the interpretation of poetry through the thematic approach, and the role of nostalgic themes in highlighting ignored themes in conventional historiography.

These texts show that love and affection towards the city was presented in literature written by both residents and visitors. In addition to natural beauty, social beauty gained additional emphasis through the learning facilities and the widespread dissemination of knowledge in Baghdad, which suggests a remarkable increase of learning activities in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Such nostalgic longing and the favourable aspects of learning are not presented in conventional history. This affirms that conventional methods, which focus on single elements, specifically political change and material features, are not sufficient to paint a complete image of the city. Thus, this representation in literary texts is crucial as it reveals missed notions in history. In short, urban literature of the Abbasid era, which lasted for four and half centuries, fluctuated between expressing admiration for the city, and complaining about social and economic problems, depending on the circumstances of the scholar, his individual experience, and the condition of the city in general.

By the mid thirteenth century, the Moguls had raided Baghdad and put an end to the Abbasid era. Conventional historiography proposes that this event marked a sharp end to an era of prosperity, and established the start of a period of recurrent disasters and conflicts. On the other hand, the literature of this period continued in the same manner of double meanings and varying expressions, which implies the absence of such sharp conclusions as are indicated in conventional historiography. It appears that social beauty experienced some setback in this period due to the loss of some scholars and the damage to learning centres. The reading of texts suggests the terrible situation after the Mogul invasion did not last for centuries, as shown in conventional histories. It rather shows that the situation improved by the end of the thirteenth century, when the Moguls were defeated in the battle of Ayn Jalut in 658/1260 and lost control by 690/1292⁵³. The literature examined in this chapter reveals the continuity of the city as an attractive learning centre which maintained its natural and social beauties despite its troubles.

However, the literature of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries gained a new element of remembrance and sadness. It is noteworthy such an element in literature did not occur after the destruction of the round city, which suggests less attachment of the people to the round city. Conversely, this practice emerged in literature after the invasion of the Moguls in 656/1258, indicating greater appreciation of the qualities of the second settlement of Baghdad. With the frequent unpredictable events that took place in Baghdad in subsequent centuries, this practice of beginning with sorrowful expressions continued until the eighteenth and

⁵² Kritzeck, *Anthology of Islamic literature*, p. 190.

⁵³ Naji, 'Simat Al-Ata'a Al-Fikri fil qarn Al-Thamin Al-Hijri', p. 191.

nineteenth centuries, along with other aspects such as appreciation of the natural and social beauties of the place. The poem of Sheikh Shamsuddin Mahmud Al-Hashimi (d. 675/ 1276) that depicts the devastating conditions after the Mogul invasion is a good example of this technique.

If my tears did not make my eyelids full of wounds
 After you passed away, then I am full of antipathy
 I wonder what happened to these homes and why everything has changed
 Where are my beloved ones and where are my old neighbours
 After you left, I wish that no breeze would move here
 And no flower would blossom and no tree branch would swing happily⁵⁴

Al-Hashimi expresses deep sadness about losing good friends and neighbours. Although the city maintained its natural beauty, this single measure of relief did not heal his wounds which stemmed from the lack of social measures. It appears that these social aspects did progress later despite other social, political and economic problems.

An overall reading of the texts investigated to this point suggests nostalgic themes are powerful tools that promote the understanding of various aspects of the history of Baghdad. Unlike remembrance that relates meanings to the past, nostalgic themes represent the past effectively and promote its interaction with present in order to improve the historical understanding. The interpretation of poetry also shows the association of the phenomenon of beauty in Baghdad with social beauty. The poets described an extremely favourable atmosphere, which was referring to intellect, imagination, and humour as major traits of beauty. While perfect social happiness was indicated in the first century of the establishment of the second settlement, undesirable social issues were outlined in the literature after two centuries of development. This change in social measures that was revealed through the interpretation of poetry was certainly not mentioned in conventional sources.

4.3.3 Spatial Themes: The Second Settlement of Baghdad

This section explores a number of spatial themes of the second settlement of Baghdad that are presented in the urban literature throughout different periods up to the eighteenth century. Apart from social beauty, these texts placed natural beauty in parallel with social beauty. The poems reflected astonishment at features of greenery and the loveliness of the river, in addition to the outstanding architectural elements that complement this natural beauty. The proximity of the second settlement to the river enhanced the beauty of the city. This characteristic became a quality of Baghdad constantly reflected in different texts throughout its history.

Although the architectural components of this city were highly admired in such literature, it seems that the proximity of this settlement to the Tigris River amplified perception of the city's beauty. The integration of natural and architectural beauty created a magnificent picture that was admired by visitors and residents alike. However, the material attributes

⁵⁴ Al-Alusi, *Baghdad fil shi'r Al-Arabi*, pp. 145-147. The Arabic script is as follows:

ان لم تفرح أدمعي أجفاني	من بعد بعدكم فما أجفاني
ما للمنازل أصبحت لا أهلها	أهلي ولا جيرانها جيرانني
سرتم فلا سرت النسيم ولازها	زهر ولا ماست غصون البان

continued to inspire visitors more than residents, as social conditions were worsening with time. During his visit to Baghdad after the decline of the round city, the poet Omarah bin Akeel bin Bilal Al-Khatafi⁵⁵ expressed a gorgeous image of the expanded settlements outside the round city.

Between the farms of *Qatrabul* and *Karkh* there are fields of narcissus flowers
And there is every fine plant and fragrant flower
You see *Dijla* [Tigris River] and its streams everywhere in this land
With many ships racing like horses
And there you find inviting palaces that embrace you with wings
Those attributes attract and welcome all visitors to the place⁵⁶

This poem by Al-Khatafi paints a magnificent picture of the second settlement of Baghdad, and expresses happiness and comfort on both sides of the river. The natural environment of the river, the large castles on its shores and the amazing greenery of the surrounding farms contributed to this great expression of beauty. The poem describes remarkable qualities of the architecture of the palaces that allowed them to communicate with people and invite them in. This indicates specific architectural forms promoted this interaction between the palace and the people. These qualities are worthy of investigation in further studies.

The geographer, Shamsuddin Al-Bashari Al-Maqdisi (d. 380/990), who was born in Jerusalem, toured almost all cities in the Islamic world. He depicted a beautiful picture of the second settlement of Baghdad in his narratives. In addition to architectural and natural assets, he connected the splendour of place to social beauty, by describing the humour, talent and knowledge of the people of Baghdad.

“Baghdad has pleasant and charming qualities for its inhabitants. These qualities include humour, talent, friendliness and knowledge. Its air is gentle and its scientific approaches are accurate. It contains every excellence and beauty. Intellectual people are born there, and all hearts are attached to Baghdad. This city is complete and famous, and above any description or praise”⁵⁷.

In this statement, Al-Bashari juxtaposed spatial qualities, such as gentle air, with intellectual scientific thinking. He referred to distinctive social qualities that resulted from this juxtaposition, including humour, sociability and knowledge. He highlighted these qualities collectively as entities of the complete beauty of Baghdad. For him, this collective beauty of Baghdad was the main reason for the strong love and affection to the city. Although architectural qualities of the learning institutes and of the whole city were also attractive, the scholar referred to this beauty as part of the collective beauty of the city rather than admiring them separately. This indicates the equal significance of other spiritual and social qualities, and the importance of juxtaposing these qualities in historiography studies, in order to improve historical understanding.

⁵⁵ Al-Khatafi remained alive until the time of the caliph Al-Watheq (d. 232/847).

⁵⁶ Al-Alusi, *Baghdad fil shi'r Al-Arabi*, pp. 22-23. The Arabic script is as follows:

تندى ومنبت خيري ونسرين	ما بين قطربل والكرخ نرجسة
دهم السفين تعالى كالبراذين	تستن دجلة فيما بينها فترى
بالزائرين الى القوم المزورين	فيها القصور التي تهوي بأجنحة

⁵⁷ Al-Alusi, *Baghdad fil shir Al-Arabi*, p. 22. The Arabic script is as follows:

"بغداد لأهلها الخصائص والظرافة، والقرائح واللطافة. هواء رقيق وعلم دقيق، كل جيد بها، وكل حسن فيها، وكل حاذق منها، وكل قلب اليها. وهي أشهر من أن توصف، وأحسن من أن تتعت، وأعلى من أن تمدح"

Al-Bashari visited Baghdad more than a hundred years after Al-Khatafi's visit, and he indicated the superiority and prosperity of the city in his writing. In contrast to Al-Khatafi's remarks, Al-Bashari was amazed by the social beauty and the natural environment more than the architectural magnificence, despite the fact that Baghdad still had great mansions at that time. These observations suggest advanced scientific thought, and the numerous learning institutes that were founded, continually created a new dimension of beauty, the social educational dimension. This new element dominated the conception of beauty at that time. This change in the notion of beauty indicates varying measurements of splendour and different views of Baghdad. These were echoed in the writings in the tenth century. However, all writings in this period agreed on the place's natural beauty as the most fixed variable of attractiveness.

The literature of the late thirteenth and fourteenth centuries also associates spatial and environmental qualities with social qualities. I quote parts of *maqamat* by Al-Gazaruni (d. 697/1297), that describe bright days of the past, and elaborate various social occasions such as Hajj season, fasting season, cemetery season⁵⁸, weekly outings and spring time. These show the pleasure experienced in the city during different religious or climatic seasons. It also portrays the western side of the city as an open area that had more capacity for recreation than the eastern side, with plenty of beautiful gardens and streams.

I swear by God that I have never seen a city better than Baghdad. How can we dare to find a similar place! Can we compare the foot with the head? ... The Hajj season is one of the great seasons in the year ... People move happily in the gardens of the western side of *Dijla*. Decorated tents are established to feed those people who spend days celebrating as individuals and as groups. When the Hajj caravan arrives, the roads will open to the pilgrims who are treated like brides and grooms, and transported to their homes in procession ... And sometimes people set out to the stunning gardens to see the beautiful flowers and hear the songs of the blackbirds ... In spring time, people gather and assemble near the streams, and they filter through the surrounding trees. They collect fruit from trees, and they spread out on the grass and on the flowers in the farm⁵⁹.

These statements contain remarkable descriptions of the social beauty of Baghdad, in addition to its lovely natural landscape. Al-Gazaruni points out a number of seasonal and religious events, and presents them in connection with impressive spatial qualities, including the river and the gardens. Such expressions are not highlighted in conventional sources, since these sources focus on only one measure of the city's history, the political. The exclusion of positive, attractive images of the city and its society established the partial understanding of the city, and introduced a large degree of presumption and imaginative interpretation into historical studies. While these sources emphasise the prosperity of Baghdad during the Abbasid age, they stress the destructive conditions of the city after this period.

⁵⁸ The cemetery season refers to a specific time when people used to visit the graveyards of their relatives and beloved ones.

⁵⁹ Al-Alusi, *Baghdad fil shi'r Al-Arabi*, pp. 152-153. The Arabic script is as follows:

"وَحَقِّكَ لَا وَاللَّهِ، مَا نَظَرْتُ عَيْنِي إِلَى أَحْسَنَ مِنْهَا بِلَدَةٍ أَبَدًا، وَكَيْفَ يَمَثُلُ بِهَا أَوْ يَقَاسُ، أَوْ يُشَبَّهَ بِالْقَدَمِ الرَّاسِ؟ ... مُوسِمُ الْحَجِّ وَهُوَ أَكْثَرُ مَوَاسِمِ السَّنَةِ ... تُضْرَبُ عَلَى دَجَلَةِ الْحَيَاضِ وَالرَّوَايَا ... يَرْتَعُونَ فِي رِيَاضِ الْجَانِبِ الْغَرْبِيِّ ... فَلَا يَزَالُونَ كَذَلِكَ أَيَّامًا يَمْرَحُونَ وَحَدَانَا وَفَنَامَا، وَالسَّبِيلُ تَجَلَّى فِي الْمَوْكَبِ إِلَى الْخِيَامِ، وَتَزَفُ إِلَى مَنَازِلِهَا ... وَمِنْهَا أَعْيَادٌ وَمَوَاسِمٌ ... يُخْرِجُ النَّاسَ إِلَى الرِّيَاضِ وَالْأَزْهَارِ لِسَمَاعِ أَصْوَاتِ الشَّحَارِيرِ ... وَأَمَّا زَمَنُ الرَّبِيعِ ... فَأَنَّهُمْ كَانُوا يَصْطَحِبُونَ وَيَتَجَمَّعُونَ ... وَيَدْخُلُونَ نَهْرَ عَيْسَى ... فَيَخْتَرِقُونَ أَشْجَارَهُ، وَيَقْطِفُونَ ثَمَارَهُ وَنَوَارَهُ، وَيَفْتَرِشُونَ رِيَاضَهُ وَأَزْهَارَهُ"

After the fourteenth century, direct spatial references became less frequent in literature and poetry, suggesting the effects of unstable conditions on the prioritising of the issues and objectives of writings. Yet, the literature of this period up to the eighteenth century presented an outstanding aspect that shows less political intimation, and more focus on the social aspects experienced in the preceding times. In relation to architectural attractiveness, the texts indirectly described exotic architectural forms, yet these components are rarely indicated in conventional references, since these references associate architectural beauty with the round city only. The period between the fifteenth and eighteenth centuries encouraged more historical writing to sustain the relationships with the honourable history of the city. These writings inspired people to improve social affairs, and to sustain a decent life, despite the unstable conditions. The investigation of spatial themes in poetry emphasised the significance of these themes in promoting the understanding of the history of Baghdad. The strong appreciation of the city regardless of its fluctuating conditions indicates the great effect of social qualities on the development and continuity of the city.

4.3.4 Reflective Themes: the Second Settlement of Baghdad

The reading of Baghdad's history through different eras indicates the continual movement of scholars between it and other cities in the region. The relatively easy means of relocation, the attractive character of Baghdad, and the changing conditions of the city, caused these constant relocations. However, these circumstances also promoted affection and love for, and attachment to, the city. For the scholars, being in a much admired and honoured city such as Baghdad gave them a sense of pride and integrity, even for those who only visited for a short period of time.

The importance of social and educational variables continued to develop and grow until they dominated other measurements. These different notions of beauty remained the focus of the literature throughout the history of the city. These characteristics attracted people from all over the surrounding cities to visit Baghdad and to choose to live there. The poet and philosopher Abul-Ala' Al-Ma'arri was among the scholars who were amazed at the qualities of Baghdad and dreamt of visiting the city and staying for a long time. Al-Ma'arri was born in Ma'arra near Aleppo in the year 363/973. He had longed to visit Baghdad since his teens but didn't achieve this dream until he was 36. In the year 398/1007, Al-Ma'arri reached Baghdad and found it to be a gathering place for philosophers and theologians from different cultures. He was also intrigued by the city's natural beauties, and so wrote a poem honouring the river and trees in a similar way to the learning institutes of Baghdad.

We were longing for Iraq while we were in our early youth
 But we couldn't get there until we became middle-aged
 We drank the finest, pure water from *Dijla* [Tigris River]
 And we visited the palm trees which are the most honorable trees⁶⁰

Al-Ma'arri expressed extreme longing for Baghdad, which he referred to as Iraq. This was because Baghdad was the site of the central government and a visitor to Baghdad was regarded as a visitor to Iraq. This was a common impression then. For example, when Al-

⁶⁰ Al-Alusi, *Baghdad fil shi'r Al-Arabi*, p. 120. The Arabic script is as follows:

كلفنا بالعراق ونحن شرح
 فلم نلهم به الا كهولا
 وردنا ماء دجلة خير ماء
 وزرنا أشرف الشجر النخيل

Ghazali stayed in Baghdad about a century later, he was called *Imam Al-Iraq* (the leader of Iraq) instead of Imam Baghdad. The poem of Al-Ma'arri shows how the glory of high level of education and learning turned the natural features of Baghdad, such as the Tigris River and palm trees, into valuable symbolic icons. Al-Ma'arri describes the water of *Dijla* as the best water⁶¹. Although the fine taste of this water was also indicated in the writings of other poets, it seems as though, for him, the taste of this water was unique, as it was mixed with his emotions and his great admiration of the city. The poem specifies the water of *Dijla* as clean, pure water, and considers it among the appealing elements of the city, which evoked attachment and admiration of the city. These emotions evoked familiarity with and affection for this place regardless of the poet's original homeland.

However, it appears the astonishing picture of Baghdad drawn by Al-Ma'arri changed in the twelfth century. The poet Ibn Al-Ta'awedhi (d. 553/1158) visited Baghdad about a century after Al-Ma'arri's visit. His poem shows an increase in social and economic problems, such as injustice and inequity.

If you intend to visit Baghdad then turn away from it
As this place is full of oppression and injustice
If you have desires in Baghdad I advise you to go back
Because all doors are closed to the people's requests⁶²

In this poem, Al-Ta'awedhi refers to inequity in distribution of wealth, and the injustice experienced in the twelfth century. He did not mention the natural beauties of the city, which shows how perceptions are changeable in the minds of writers, and how they are interrelated with other aspects of the city, paralleling political and economic aspects. These changes influenced people to leave the city, but did not affect their great attachment to the city. However, Baghdad intermittently continued to attract scholars to live there. Among these scholars is the poet and religious scholar, Safey Al-Din Al-Hilli, who was among the many eminent scholars of the fourteenth century. Al-Hilli was born in 675/1276 in Hillah, located one hundred kilometers south of Baghdad. During his life, he lived in various cities including Baghdad, Damascus, Cairo and Mardin, yet he stayed for the longest time in Baghdad and died there in 750/1349.

Among the particular objectives of the poems of Al-Hilli, and of other scholars at that time, is their advice to keep remembering God and His power, and to respect and appreciate His blessings to avoid distress. These poems demonstrate the great influence that scholars had on people throughout the history of Baghdad, and their immense social role in calming anxiety and helping people to rise above their problems. For example, Al-Hilli wrote a poem advising people to avoid thinking about problems, and to keep hoping for the best, as a productive manner of overcoming the troubles of life.

Turn away from your worries
And leave things to your destiny
Because maybe narrow ways will suddenly expand

⁶¹ It is worthy of note that the second river that passes through Iraq, the Euphrates River, also passes through Syria or *Bilad Al-Sham*, the home of Al-Ma'arri, but that he was keen to taste Tigris River water.

⁶² Al-Alusi, *Baghdad fil shir Al-Arabi*, p.127. The Arabic script is as follows:

ياقاصدا بغداد حد عن بلدة
ان كنت طالب حاجة فارجع فقد
للجور فيها زخرة وعباب
سدت على الراجي بها الأبواب

And maybe open spaces will become narrow⁶³

Al-Hilli explains in this poem that good and bad situations will never remain endless, as hard times might get better, and good things could get worse. He associated spatial qualities, such as size and narrowness, with feelings and emotions. The poet emphasises the strong influence of various emotions on the conception of place. These juxtaposed characteristics are the most important techniques to understand the past, as material scales and measurements cannot present the real conditions of the city unless they are linked to other immaterial qualities.

Baghdad was not Al-Hilli's home city, yet his poems imply his enthusiasm and pride for the city and his people who lived there. Another one of his poems associates love and pride of Baghdad with high ethics and social relationships. The poem conveys his feelings in relation to a battle that took place in Baghdad, and it proves the courage and nobility of Al-Hilli's group. It also illustrates strong connections between his people and high ethical standards, indicating the appreciation of good values in society and the association of these values with the remarkable history of the city.

I recall that day when a battle took place in the *Zawra'* of Iraq
When we defeated our enemies like they used to defeat us
We are a nation of high ethics and nobility
We don't hurt anyone first until he hurts us
Our deeds are white, our battles are black
Our farms are green, and our swords are red⁶⁴

In addition to describing the nobility of this group, Al-Hilli expressed his pride in Baghdad. He recalled the bright history of the city, proudly calling it the *Zawra'* of Iraq⁶⁵. Al-Hilli employed a technique from the Qur'an of using opposing words in comparison with each other. This poem employs the symbolic meanings of colours to explain some features of the city. While he highlights the farms of Baghdad with the green colour that symbolises fertility, he expresses their deeds with white colour that symbolises purity and nobility. On the other hand, he associates their battles with black colour and their swords with red to symbolise their bravery and continuous victory. This poem reflects a double interaction between place and people. These interrelationships are important to any historiographical study, to promote the understanding of history.

Historians consider Al-Hilli's eloquent poems among the foremost products of Arabic literature from that century, as he initiated new methods of arts, poetry and literature that had not been practiced before⁶⁶. The continuous renewal of writing methods in the fourteenth

⁶³ Al-Bustani, K (ed.) 2009, *Dewan Safey Al-Din Al-Hilli* (Arabic), Dar Saber, Beirut.
<www.waqfeya.com/book.php?bid=3112>. The Arabic script is as follows:

كن عن همومك معرضا وكل الأمور الى القضا
فلربما اتسع المضيق وربما ضاق الفضاء

⁶⁴ Al-Bustani, K (ed.) 2009, *Dewan Safey Al-Din Al-Hilli* (Arabic), Dar Saber, Beirut, pp. 20-21.
<www.waqfeya.com/book.php?bid=3112>. The Arabic script is as follows:

يايوم وقعة زوراء العراق وقد دنا الأعداي كما كانوا يدينونا
انا لقوم أبت أخلاقنا شرفا أن نبتدي بالأذى من ليس يؤذينا
بيض صنائعنا سود وقائعنا خضر مرابعنا حمر مواضعنا

⁶⁵ As mentioned previously, the name *Zawra'* refers to the round city of Baghdad. Yet it appears that the second settlement of Baghdad also inherited this powerful historical name.

⁶⁶ Al-Zarkali, Kh 1978, *Al-A'alam* (Arabic), Al-Warrak Publishing, London, viewed 9 June 2013.
<<http://www.alwaraq.net/Core/waraq/coverpage?bookid=511&option=1>>

century indicates remarkable development in different branches of knowledge, despite fluctuating conditions. These modes and styles in literature continued to develop through the fifteenth century. On the other hand, the literature of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries reflected influences from a combination of different languages. Although this phenomenon reduced Arabic writings to an extent, historical writings about Baghdad remained plentiful, and although they were written in multiple languages, the subjects were always parallel.

Furthermore, notions of *Sufism* started to appear in literature in the sixteenth century onwards, and grew rapidly in the region. Among the eminent *Sufi* Iraqi poets in the sixteenth century was Mohammed bin Suleiman Futhuli Al-Baghdadi. This poet was born in Karbala' - a city south of Baghdad - in 887/1483, and later moved to Hilla where he resided for some time, before moving to Baghdad. Lastly, he moved back to Karbala', where he died during a plague epidemic in 963/1556. Futhuli composed eloquent poems in three languages; Arabic, Turkish and Persian, and was proud that he did not leave Iraq at any stage of his life. His poems included those focused on praising the companions of the Prophet Mohammed and advising people to be positive and withstand any terrible situations that faced them, in addition to many *Sufi* prayers and reflections. Following is an example of his *Sufi* poetry:

I am proud of the passion that is hidden inside me
This is a blessing from Allah which is granted to whomever He chooses
Without Him being the centre of all eras
The system of the universe would be unsettled⁶⁷

According to Falah Oghlu, Futhuli's poems were very powerful as they contributed vastly to the restoration of positive values in society⁶⁸. In addition, these poems indicated love and appreciation of the city and its society, yet they were not focused on physical descriptions. Instead, they were filled with emotional appeals to God's mercy, in order to obtain strength and hope. Another literary objective of the sixteenth century was travel writing, since many scholars had a passion for travel and learning about different cities in the region. An example of these writings is *Al-Rihla Al-Abbasiyya* (the Abbasid letter) by Mustafa Abdul-Qadir Al-Abbasi Al-Baghdadi (d.971/1563)⁶⁹. The writing of history was also another remarkable objective of literature in this century, and in the centuries following. The book *Tarekh Baghdad* (the history of Baghdad) by Ma'mun bin Bega (997/1588)⁷⁰ is an example of such historical references. This book took the form of a diary, which comprised broad descriptions of the different governments of Baghdad.

Moreover, the sixteenth century produced a great number of collected anthologies by various poets. An example of these books is *Gulshan Shu'ara* by Ahmed bin Shams Al-Baghdadi (d.1002/1593)⁷¹. These plentiful writings and varieties of objectives, demonstrate the continuous development of literature in this century. Considering the sixteenth century was

⁶⁷ Bayat, MM 2008, *Futhuli Al-Baghdadi: sha'er Ahlul-Bayt* (Arabic), Bizturkmeniz.

<<http://www.bizturkmeniz.com/ar/showArticle.asp?id=13397>>. The Arabic script is as follows:

اباهي بوجد قد تكمن في الحشا وذلك فضل الله يؤتيه من يشا
فلولا مدار الدهر مركز خاله لكان نظام الكائنات مشوشا

⁶⁸ Oghlu, FY 2011, *Futhuli Al-Baghdadi: sultan Al-shu'ara' Al-Turkman* (Arabic), Eskitisin, Kirkuk,
<<http://eskitisin.net/adab/turk%20sairlari/fuduli%2002.html>>.

⁶⁹ Ra'of, IA 2009, *Attarekh wal-Mu'arrikhoon Al-Iraqiyyoon fil ahd Al-Othmani* (Arabic), Al-Warrak Publishing Ltd, Beirut, London, p. 109.

⁷⁰ Ra'of, *Attarekh wal-Mu'arrikhoon Al-Iraqiyyoon fil ahd Al-Othmani*, p. 113.

⁷¹ Ra'of, *Attarekh wal-Mu'arrikhoon Al-Iraqiyyoon fil ahd Al-Othmani*, p. 114.

the century of extensive fights between the Ottomans and the Safavids over the control of Baghdad, it becomes clear there is a neglected thread in conventional historiography. This thread represents the social and cultural development of the city, and although it always runs parallel to the political line, it cannot be fully influenced by political issues. Such developments are not highlighted in the conventional historiography of Baghdad, which signifies this period as a period of conflicts and recurrent disasters.

The writing methods and objectives of the sixteenth century continued to exist in the seventeenth century. These include collecting anthologies by various poets, documenting historical events and travel writing. An example of a major reference for the poets of the seventeenth century is the book *Khizanat Al-Adab* (rhetoric treasures) by Abdul-Qadir bin Omar Al-Baghdadi (d.1093/1682)⁷². Additionally, the book *Uyoon Akhbnar Al-A'ayan* (history of famous scholars) by Ahmed bin Abdullah Al-Baghdadi Al-Ghurabi (d.1102/1690) is an example of historical books that comprised extensive research about Islamic history⁷³ (Figures 24, 25). A third example of the literature of the seventeenth century is a travel book written by Mohammed bin Abdul-Hamed Al-Baghdadi (d.1064/1653), who travelled to many cities including Baghdad, Makkah, Aleppo and Damascus⁷⁴.

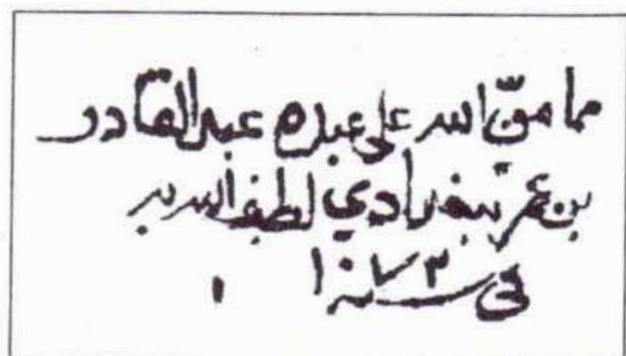


Figure 24: A sample of script by Abdul-Qadir Al-Baghdadi [Ra'of 2009]

Figure 25: A page in a book by Ahmed Al-Ghurabi [Ra'of 2009]

These modes and aims in literature and poetry also continued to develop in the first half of the eighteenth century. Among the distinctive scholars of this period is Mohammed Ameen Al-Kadhemi (d.1118/1706)⁷⁵, who wrote many books relating to history and to Arabic literature. Another scholar is the poet and historian Murtadha bin Mohammed Aal Nadhmi (d.1136/1732)⁷⁶, who wrote a significant book about the history of Baghdad called *Gulshan*

⁷² Ra'of, *Attarekh wal-Mu'arrikhoon Al-Iraqiyyoon fil ahd Al-Othmani*, p. 126.

⁷³ Ra'of, *Attarekh wal-Mu'arrikhoon Al-Iraqiyyoon fil ahd Al-Othmani*, pp. 132-133.

⁷⁴ Ra'of, *Attarekh wal-Mu'arrikhoon Al-Iraqiyyoon fil ahd Al-Othmani*, pp. 131-132.

⁷⁵ Ra'of, *Attarekh wal-Mu'arrikhoon Al-Iraqiyyoon fil ahd Al-Othmani*, p. 139.

⁷⁶ Ra'of, *Attarekh wal-Mu'arrikhoon Al-Iraqiyyoon fil ahd Al-Othmani*, p. 140.

Khulafa (history of caliphs). A third example is Yousif Azeez Al-Moulawi (d.1153/1740)⁷⁷ who was a poet, an historian and a *Sufi* leader. The ample quantity of writings in these centuries asserts the literary and intellectual movements were not heavily affected by political conflicts, yet they occasionally caused a reduction in intellectual products. The further development of literature in Baghdad in the late eighteenth century and nineteenth century is discussed in the next chapter.

The textual representations in this chapter illustrated a distinctive component of literature in this period, which was the enhancement of remembrance as a common method in writing. This phenomenon is apparent in Baghdad's literature, indicating a great determination to establish links with historical time. Conversely, conventional histories deal with history and remembrance as isolated matters that have no connection to present time. The period between the establishment of Baghdad and the eighteenth century introduced numerous writings on different subjects. Unlike the poetry of the period between the tenth and fourteenth centuries, which contained direct clues on the urban forms of the city, the poetry and literature between the fifteenth and eighteenth century lacked these direct indications. Also, many writings of this period were lost due to different political and social changes. However, this literature continued to convey different spatial and nostalgic ideas, which need to be investigated methodically to disclose hints about the urban development of the city.

Conventional historiography regarded the availability of direct indications of urban developments in the literature of the early centuries of Baghdad's formation as a sign of the prosperity of the city. It also considered the shortage of such indications in the literature of the period after the fifteenth century as a sign of the decline of the city. Nevertheless, the alternative method in historiography that considers all aspects of the historical experience in historiographical investigation, suggests the lack of literature and poetry in the later centuries does not necessarily imply a total decline of the city's development. This shortage rather indicates a lack of methodological studies in historiography that reveal concealed and undiscovered ideas of the urban history of the city.

4.4 Representational Outcomes and Conventional Historiography

This chapter has focused on the textual representation of Baghdad since the foundation of the round city up until the mid-eighteenth century. The aim of this analysis is to determine some aspects of the urban history of Baghdad, which have been either undiscovered or misrepresented in conventional historiographies. The method of interpretation aimed to attain horizontal interpretation that employs interconnection and comparison. It also employs vertical interpretation that was not limited to these two methods. The thematic approach was also implemented in the investigation of distinctive, ignored notions of the urban history of Baghdad. This technique utilised double interpretation of texts to obtain the general meaning across multiple texts first, and then interpreted single texts to elaborate that meaning.

The reading of the poetry and literature of the period between the eighth and eighteenth centuries provided additional ideas, apart from conventional images. In contrast to the intense focus of conventional historiography on the splendour of the round city, the literature of this period did not significantly highlight the wonder of this city. Furthermore, the few poems that mentioned the round city outlined negative features, more than commending positive issues.

⁷⁷ Ra'of, *Attarekh wal-Mu'arrikhoon Al-Iraqiyyoon fil ahd Al-Othmani*, p.145.

Conversely, the second settlement of Baghdad, that emerged simultaneously with the round city and developed gradually, has held a greater space in literature since its beginnings. In regards to the image of the city, different textual representations illustrated a variety of impressions; while some texts expressed great appreciation of the city, others viewed the city as a place of injustice. Likewise, attachment to the city is indicated differently in texts depending on the circumstances of the writer and the aim of the piece of writing. This variety produces more balanced impressions of the city, since historical laws (discussed in Chapter Two) emphasise the impossibility of having fixed conditions of cities throughout history.

Another outcome of this representation is in realising the association of the development of Baghdad with the activity of the markets. Although conventional sources pointed to the ancient market village⁷⁸, these sources presented market activity as a temporary urban component necessitated by the central location of Baghdad, yet they made no connection to the history of the city. On the other hand, although literature did not show a direct connection with the market place, it referred to it indirectly by illustrating the great social atmosphere, superb functionality and outstanding social features of the second settlement of Baghdad. It appears the founding of the round city focussed great administrative attention on Baghdad, replacing its reputation and identity as a market place. These changes preoccupied conventional historiography, which accordingly diminished the connections between markets and the development of Baghdad. This places market activities at the top of topics neglected by conventional sources.

The textual representations in this chapter emphasised the long existence of social, natural and material beauty in the second settlement of Baghdad, which is certainly associated with market activity, in addition to other social and natural aspects. A market village was originally established on the eastern side of Baghdad. The foundation of the round city on the western side added confusion to this activity, but it could not change its character. On the contrary, historically, the second settlement gained additional glory and grand physical features from the round city. These features, alongside the practicality of the markets, the blessing of the river, and the brilliance of learning institutes, combined to enhance the extended survival of the second settlement of Baghdad.

Conventional history considers the Abbasid era the only bright period in the urban history of Baghdad, and it draws a sharp line between the Abbasid period and later centuries. While they interpret the Abbasid period as one of prosperity, conventional sources describe the period that followed as an era of adversity. These sources considered gloominess a constant feature that accompanied the history of Baghdad for centuries. These assumptions resulted in a confused and misunderstood history. On the other hand, textual representation illustrated a mixture of positive and negative aspects in all periods. Undoubtedly, the recurrent invasions of foreign groups affected the status of the city from a historical perspective, yet conventional writings emphasise the individual aspects of history, and exaggerate tragic events. On the contrary, the reading of texts showed a remarkable situation of continuously changing character, with a frequent rise and decline of the city, highlighting realistic and deeper meanings of the city's history.

⁷⁸ Ra'of, *Al-Iqd Al-Lami' bi athar Baghdad wal masajed wal jawame'*, p.20. Also see Jawad, Susa, Makkiyya & Ma'ruf, *Baghdad*. See also Mohammed Ali, *Madinat Baghdad*.

Another attribute of Baghdad that was revealed through the reading of texts was the attraction of intellectual activity that gave many scholars an eager desire to reside there. This activity is outlined in literature as a fixed feature of Baghdad that contributed greatly to perceptions of the beauty of the city. Apart from an extensive documentation of the construction features of schools and mosques that represent learning centres in Baghdad, conventional historiography does not highlight intellectual activity as a powerful component of place; rather it presents those centres as a remnant of Baghdad's past. The implementation of new methods in writing and the plentiful amount of literature throughout the history of Baghdad, indicate a continuous advancement of literature in general. These constant developments suggest a parallel but, at the same time, separate line between political and intellectual development in the history of Baghdad. Thus, it is unrealistic and incorrect to let political measures dominate ideas about the intellectual and literary products of this period.

The comparison between the alternative method and conventional methods indicates the importance of the method for interpretation. While the alternative method searches for ideas that establish connection and integration between the meanings of texts, conventional methods promote separation and isolation. Among the unique outcomes of this comparison of texts is that the alternative method focuses on the maintenance of the meaning of place. For example, instead of dealing with market activity and learning centres as physical features, the alternative method deals with them as permanent characteristics of place. This implies these attributes cannot be altered by periodic physical destruction. Therefore, the alternative method promotes the advancement of ideas, and establishes strong links between these ideas and physical development to ensure a solid understanding of history.

On the other hand, conventional methods relate the interpretation of history to the material conditions, and ignore the meaning of place. However, it is important to stress the interpretation of texts does not eliminate the role of conventional methods; rather they accompany these methods to institute better understanding of history. In conclusion, the examination of the urban history of Baghdad prior to the eighteenth century confirms the validity of the alternative method. The outcomes of this method recognise additional ideas, which are strongly linked to people's life, yet they are not covered in conventional historiography.

5. Textual Representation of Overlooked Themes and Spaces in the 18th and 19th Centuries

The representation of the texts through different periods earlier than the eighteenth century shows an inconsistent yet plentiful amount of intellectual writings. The reading of these texts confirms the disparity between political and intellectual lines in history, regardless of their collective and occasional influence. In addition, the method of reading these texts proved valid in searching for a more comprehensive meaning of place, by implementing the principles of the alternative method; the *infinite interlocking interpretation*. This method utilises different interpretations of historical texts, as well as the interconnection and comparison of different periods throughout history. This is done to achieve the ultimate aims of the alternative method; advancement, balance and complete vision. As with Chapter Four, this chapter applies the alternative method to examine texts from the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The study analyses a wider variety of texts, compared with Chapter Four, to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of this period, considered to be one of the most enigmatic periods in the history of Baghdad.

This method of interpretation resumes the use of the twofold meaning of texts, and implements vertical interpretation that considers linking historical meanings, rather than horizontal interpretation, which involves the restrictions of time and place in interpretation. It also employs the thematic approach, using the same topics as those in Chapter Four to highlight the overlooked themes and ignored spaces of the period. The textual representation of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries is analysed in both this, and the following chapter. This chapter uses the thematic approach through urban representations in the literature and poetry of Baghdadi scholars. This representation focuses on spatial and nostalgic themes, since these themes are widely covered in the chosen texts. On the other hand, textual analysis in Chapter Six focuses on the reflective approach, to explain the reflections of travelers on the city. The comparison and interconnection between these internal and external expressions highlights many undiscovered ideas in the history of Baghdad.

This study starts with an explanation of the circumstances of the scholars and the literary activities in the late eighteenth century, followed by a biography of three scholars, and an outline of the reason for selecting these specific scholars. Finally, the study examines a number of texts to represent themes that are ignored or misrepresented in conventional historiography.

5.1 The Conditions of Scholars in Late 18th and Early 19th Centuries

In the eighteenth century, Baghdad retained its position as a major city with multiple markets, and a place for Hajj caravans to assemble, in addition to continuously holding the seat of central government. Yet it appears that the geographical and honorary position of Baghdad as a major learning centre has weakened in this century. The permanent migration of scholars due to unstable situations, and the freedom of movement between Baghdad and the surrounding lands, enabled scholars to move to the adjoining cities and establish further learning centres. Despite the positive aspect of founding multiple learning centres, the move of scholars outside Baghdad resulted in some negative aspects, such as inconsistency and interruptions to writings, and the loss or damage of some valuable books.

However, in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the general conditions of Baghdad improved, as occasional tragic events, such as sieges, fights, floods and epidemics became less frequent. Consequently, Baghdadi learning centres partially retained their affluence. The city continued to raise a number of eminent scholars and intellectual leaders, though reverse migration inside and outside Baghdad continued, due to constant changeable circumstances. These conditions made it a difficult task to find a scholar who had stayed in Baghdad for a long time. Such scholars, who continued to live in Baghdad despite many hardships, contributed to the stability of society and the maintenance of faith in the community after each disaster that caused a great loss of life.

The literature and poetry selected to be represented in this research is mainly from three scholars. First, the famous poet, Sheikh Kadhem Al-Uzari, second, the historian and religious scholar Sheikh Abdul-Rahman Al-Suwaidi, and finally, the poet and religious scholar Sheikh Saleh Al-Tamimi. However, the representation is not totally confined to their intellectual products. The narratives and poetry of other scholars are also examined to outline some ideas that are not clearly displayed in the writings of the selected scholars. These other scholars include Abdul-Baqi Al-Umari, Mahmud Shukri Al-Alusi and Abdul-Hameed Abadah. In order to attain the objectives of the alternative method, a variety of texts that belong to different attitudes, periods, locales, and different meanings, is analysed in this chapter.

The poetry of Al-Uzari is very eloquent and unique. It contains a great amount of self-expressions, metaphoric images and scientific links, which make it a great source of ideas and revelations about the urban history of Baghdad in that period. Alternatively, the historical narratives and poetry of Al-Suwaidi portray specific concepts of the eighteenth century, in addition to personal experience and judgments, which also make it a potential source of historiography of the eighteenth century. Lastly, the poetry of the famous poet and religious scholar, Sheikh Saleh Al-Tamimi indicate remarkable observations of the architectural and urban development of Baghdad at that time. By comparing these texts and interlocking their meanings, they reveal the hidden meanings of the urban history of the city by highlighting additional aspects in history. In order to understand the circumstances of these exemplar scholars, it is useful to learn about the life of each of them, in addition to their writing styles.

5.1.1 Sensitivity and Scientific Approaches in Al-Uzari's Poetry

“No one in Baghdad was able to write eloquent poems better than Al-Uzari”¹

The Baghdadi poet Sheikh Kadhemi Al-Uzari was among the most prominent scholars in eighteenth century Baghdad. He belonged to a dignified family, which included a number of prominent scholars². In the early seventeenth century, Al-Uzari's family immigrated to a neighbourhood called Ra's Al-Qurayya in eastern Baghdad³, where he was later born in 1143/1730⁴. The name *uzari* came from his grandfather who used to sell a particular kind of clothing, called *uzur*⁵. At one stage, Al-Uzari moved to Karkh in western Baghdad, where he spent the rest of his life. The date of Al-Uzari's move from eastern Baghdad to the western part is not specified by historians, but literature indicates that he was mature when he moved to Karkh, probably in his mid-thirties. Al-Uzari never returned to his home in eastern Baghdad. He died in Karkh in 1212/1797 at the age of sixty seven, and he was buried in the Al-Kadhemiyya district of northern Baghdad⁶. This reveals the increasingly unpleasant conditions in eastern Baghdad, and the growing interest of scholars and other members in the society to reside in western Baghdad (Karkh) to be away from troubles.

In his poetry, Al-Uzari expressed his love of the eastern part, but at the same time, complained of constant fights, and the increase in traitors, who reported lies to the governors to please them. On the other hand, he described the western part of Baghdad as home, and expressed a lot of affection towards it. This explains the difficulty of having a peaceful life during the early decades of the Mamluks' rule. Like other scholars in the area, Al-Uzari studied Arabic literature, Islamic sciences, history, theology, philosophy, Qur'anic interpretation, and astronomy. He excelled in literature and wrote eloquent poems at the young age of twenty. Al-Uzari was highly knowledgeable in *tafseer* (Qur'anic interpretation), *hadeeth* (the Prophetic traditions), theology, Arabic philology and historical sciences. Historians describe him as proficient in debating, quick minded, very smart, with a powerful memory and full of humour⁷.

The poems of Al-Uzari are full of wisdom, metaphors and notions from the Qur'an. They contain remarkable insights about the social and urban characteristics of Baghdad. In addition, his poetry comprises different subjects, such as science, astronomy and geography. These poems also indicated spiritual and visionary tendencies, and dealt with many philosophical and scientific facts. Al-Uzari's poems proved popular in the society of Baghdad, since they combined uniquely fluent language and pleasant style with powerful meanings. Among his outstanding strategies in poetry, Al-Uzari uses the symbolic meaning of scientific facts to describe the ethics of a person or to refer to some events. This group of Al-Uzari's poems presents an ideal intermingling of scientific and symbolic matters, which is worth further examination.

¹ Shubbar, *Adab Al-Taff*, p. 29.

² Among the scholars of Al-Uzari family are Sheikh Mohammed Ridha, Sheikh Yousif, and Sheikh Mas'ud.

³ Shubbar, *Adab Al-Taff*, p. 30.

⁴ According to Abadah, Ra's Al-Qurayya neighbourhood lies in the same place as the administrative centre of the Abbasids, or *dar alkhilafa*, close to *suq alwarraqeen* (book market). See Ra'of (ed.), *Al-Iqd Al-Lami' bi athar Baghdad wal masajed wal jawame'*, p.317.

⁵ Shubbar, *Adab Al-Taff*, p. 29.

⁶ Shukur, Sh (ed.) 1980, *Dewan Al-Uzari Al-Kabeer* (Arabic), Dar Al-Ttawjeeh Al-Islami, Beirut, p. 27.

⁷ Shukur (ed.), *Dewan Al-Uzari Al-Kabeer*, p. 19. Also see Shubbar, *Adab Al-Taff*, p. 30.

Al-Uzari's poetry does not have direct links with the architectural and urban forms of the city, yet these are embedded in the texts. His poems are usually dedicated to leaders and prominent historical figures such as the Prophet Mohammed and his successors. Also a good number of his poems are devoted to community leaders at the time, like Suleyman and Abdullah Al-Shawi. Those people did not hold official positions in governments of Baghdad or any other city, yet they had great relationships with the Arabic clans around Baghdad. However, they were powerful, knowledgeable and respected leaders. With their bravery, nobility and wisdom, they acted as a means of communication in conflicts, and participated in solving problems in Baghdad⁸. Historians state Al-Uzari's relationship with those leaders became stronger after his return from the Hajj in 1161/1748⁹. This explains the dedication of knowledgeable people like Al-Uzari and other scholars to conciliation by the mid-eighteenth century, at a time of increasing conflicts between the Mamluks over the governance of Baghdad.

The poetry of Al-Uzari also contained some sympathy for tragic events which occurred in Baghdad. Yet regardless of the particular aim of a poem, the reading of these poems embraces a wealth of genuine ideas about the social atmosphere of the city, the urban landscape, and different architectural and urban forms¹⁰. The poems of Al-Uzari are very inspiring and full of sensitivity, yet they also include a lot of complicated notions that require a careful analysis (applied in this chapter) to expose many ideas about the urban history of Baghdad.

5.1.2 Historical Productivity in Al-Suwaidi's Narratives and Poetry

The historian and religious scholar Abdul Rahman Al-Suwaidi was a famous scholar of Baghdad in the eighteenth century. He belonged to a recognised religious and educated family, who moved to Baghdad from *Dur* in the late sixteenth century and settled in the western part of the city¹¹. His father, Abdullah Al-Suwaidi, was also a religious scholar. He taught in Al-Madrasa Al-Marjaniyya, and composed many books¹². Abdul Rahman Al-Suwaidi was born in 1133/1721 in a neighbourhood called Khidr Al-Yas in Karkh, western Baghdad. At the age of 11, he moved with his family to Hilla due to a siege on Baghdad in 1145/1732, but they returned to Baghdad shortly after the siege. This temporary move gave him a chance to learn from other prominent scholars and poets in Hilla. Some of these scholars had lived in Baghdad, but they moved for different political and social reasons. Also at this early age, Al-Suwaidi received his first certificate from the *Sufi* Sheikh Mohammed bin Aqila Al-Hanafi Al-Makki (d.1149/1737)¹³.

At the age of fifteen, Abdul Rahman Al-Suwaidi enrolled in a high school in eastern Baghdad, where he received a great amount of knowledge. He started to write poems in his late teens

⁸ For more details about this family see Ra'of, 1978, *Tarekh hawadeth Baghdad wal Basrah*, p. 87. Also see Ra'of (ed.), *Al-Iqd Al-Lami' bi athar Baghdad wal masajed wal jawame'*, p.598.

⁹ Shukur (ed.), *Dewan Al-Uzari Al-Kabeer*, pp. 25-26. This shows that the experience of the Hajj encourages people to seek more knowledge and become better people.

¹⁰ These ideas are explored in this chapter.

¹¹ Ra'of (ed.), *Tarekh hawadeth Baghdad wal Basrah*, p. 16.

¹² Ra'of (ed.), *'Al-Iqd Al-Lami' bi athar Baghdad wal masajed wal jawame'*, p.369. Also see Ra'of, IA & Al-Baghdadi, AMSA-R (eds) 2007, *Tarekh Al-Osar Al-Ilmiyyah fi Baghdad* (Arabic), Dar Al-Shu'on At-Taqaifiyya Al-A'ammah, A'adamiyyah- Baghdad, pp. 176-181.

¹³ Ra'of & Al-Baghdadi (eds), *Tarekh hAl-Osar Al-Ilmiyyah fi Baghdad*, p. 179.

and started teaching in eastern Baghdad schools in his early twenties, which indicates the learning centres in eastern Baghdad were still effective, and continued to attract scholars to learn and teach as usual. In 1156/1743, another siege was enforced on Baghdad, and Al-Suwaidi had to move from Karkh to live in fortified eastern Baghdad, where he stayed about a year with his younger brother. Although he left Karkh for a relatively short time, and although he was still living in Baghdad, Al-Suwaidi missed Karkh very much, and he expressed his sad emotions in his poems, which shows the huge difference between the two parts of Baghdad at that time. While the fortified eastern part comprised important facilities, and contained fine buildings, it lacked comfort and freedom. On the other hand, with its natural beauty and calm atmosphere, Karkh evoked more love and attachment. The poetry of Al-Suwaidi, which will be examined later in this chapter, clearly elaborates these differences.

Unlike Al-Uzari who did not have strong relationships with the governors of the Ottoman and Mamluks' rule, Al-Suwaidi's family established good relationships with some of them at certain times. Al-Suwaidi's father (Abdullah) established strong relationships with the *wali* Ahmed pasha who had ruled Baghdad since 1136/1732. *Sheikh* Abdullah composed official letters, making him close to Ahmed *pasha*, who appointed him as a legal advisor or *mufti* of both Karbala and Najaf territories, and assigned him an annual salary from the farms of Karbala¹⁴. This affluence diminished by the end of the rule of Ahmed *pasha* in 1160/1747. However, Abdul Rahman Al-Suwaidi established some kind of relationship with later Mamluk rulers, such as Omar *pasha* and Suleyman the old. These relationships influenced his writing style and attitudes, as he wrote a number of books and poems to document the life history of these governors, or to provide a present in the shape of a precious book for them. His first long poem, composed at the age of twenty two was dedicated to Ahmed *pasha*. Also the books *Hadeqat Al-Zawra' fi Sirat Al-Wuzara'* and *Tarekh Hawadeth Baghdad wal Basrah* are examples of these writings¹⁵.

Apart from his relationship with governors, Al-Suwaidi wrote other historical books that document various stages of Baghdad's history. He also wrote about *fiqh* (jurisprudence), wisdom, *Sufism*, Arabic grammar and astronomy¹⁶. In his book *Tarekh Hawadeth Baghdad wal Basrah*, Abdul Rahman Al-Suwaidi documented the events of 1772-1778¹⁷. This book contains important information regarding the urban features, society and culture of Baghdad at a critical period of time. The book takes the shape of a diary of the author's trip from Baghdad to Basra when plague hit Baghdad in 1772, causing a severe loss of lives. Al-Suwaidi wrote it as a gift to the Mamluks' *wali*, Hassan *pasha*, who ruled Baghdad between 1778 and 1780. Al-Suwaidi, who was fifty-one years old at that time, considered it to be one of the hardest times in his life, as disease affected his friends, and the terrible situation forced him to leave. Soon after the danger stopped he wanted to return to Baghdad, but Omar *pasha* ordered him to stay in Basra, and work there as a *qadhi* (judge) as well as a teacher.

Al-Suwaidi managed to send his family back to Baghdad, while he stayed in Basra for another two and a half years. Although he was warmly welcomed in Basra as a notable scholar, and was appointed as a judge and a teacher, he missed Baghdad dearly, and he kept attempting to return back until he finally achieved this goal in 1188/1775. Al-Suwaidi

¹⁴ Ra'of & Al-Baghdadi (eds), *Tarekh Al-Osar Al-Ilmiyyah fi Baghdad*, p. 181.

¹⁵ For more about these books see Khulusi (ed.), *Tarekh Baghdad, Hadeqat Al-Zawra' fi Sirat Al-Wuzara'*. Also see Ra'of (ed.), *Tarekh hawadeth Baghdad wal Basrah*. See the bibliography for the title's translation.

¹⁶ For a full list of Al-Suwaidi's writings see Ra'of (ed.), *Tarekh hawadeth Baghdad wal Basrah*, pp. 32-36.

¹⁷ Ra'of (ed.), *Tarekh hawadeth Baghdad wal Basrah*.

expressed his suffering and longing for Baghdad in his poems and narratives. Although he retained his love and admiration for Karkh, he also expressed love and appreciation of eastern Baghdad, which suggests some positive change there in late eighteenth century. The writings of Al-Suwaidi contain depictions of the urban landscape of Baghdad, and particular qualities that contributed to its beauty in the eyes of the poet, which make them a good source for the historiography of Baghdad. Al-Suwaidi died in Karkh in 1200/1812 and was buried in the cemetery of Ma'ruf Al-Karkhi¹⁸.

5.1.3 Architectural Pleasure in Al-Tamimi's Poetry

The poet and religious scholar Sheikh Saleh Al-Tamimi was among the renowned scholars of Baghdad in the early decades of the nineteenth century. Al-Tamimi was born in Al-Kadhemiyya northern Baghdad in 1189/1776. He belonged to a knowledgeable family that comprised many prominent scholars, including his grandfather *Sheikh* Ali Al-Zaini. At an early age (probably when he was ten) his father passed away. Al-Tamimi moved with his grandfather (Al-Zaini) to Najaf, a city south of Baghdad, and then moved to Hilla and stayed there for a while. In this period, Al-Tamimi studied many subjects and attended many scientific debates between his grandfather and other scholars, which advanced his knowledge considerably. Historians describe Al-Tamimi as a clever and brilliant student during his learning stages. He started to write eloquent poems in his teens, and he was well known for his improvised poems. Al-Tamimi was also recognised for having an easy personality, a sense of humour, a quick memory and plentiful knowledge¹⁹.

Throughout his stay in Hilla, during the year 1241/1825, the people of Hilla revolted against the last Mamluks' governor, Dawud *pasha*. Accordingly, Al-Tamimi composed a number of informal, yet constructive poems, which amazed everyone and evoked a great deal of appreciation for their fluency and unique style, to the extent that people started to call him Abu Tammam of the era²⁰. Consequently, Dawud *pasha* was very impressed with Al-Tamimi's writing and composing abilities, and ordered him to move to Baghdad, and appointed him the head of the composition bureau (*Dewan Al-Inshaa'*). Al-Tamimi stayed in eastern Baghdad for twenty years. During his stay in Baghdad, a construction and renovation scheme was initiated, and many mosques, schools, markets and other public buildings were either renovated or rebuilt. In addition, housing styles became more decorative, with lots of ornamentation and fine architectural details.

Since it was a tradition at that time to document the date of construction in poetry, Al-Tamimi composed many poems in relation to the renovation of mosques and other buildings of Baghdad. These poems contain important insights into the architectural and urban development of Baghdad. Beside this, Al-Tamimi wrote about the beauty of Baghdad and the Tigris River, in addition to a number of poems that comprise enthusiasm and ethics. These poems had a great influence on society. Furthermore, they consist of important concepts and vital descriptions of the atmosphere of Baghdad in early nineteenth century. These qualities

¹⁸ Ra'of (ed.), *Tarekh hawadeth Baghdad wal Basrah*, p. 31.

¹⁹ Al-Ameen, M 1951, *A'yan Al-Shi'a* (Arabic), viewed 2 June 2013, <<http://www.alseraj.net/a-k/rejal/ayan/1.pdf>>.

²⁰ Abu Tammam Al-Ta'e was a famous poet in the ninth century during the Abbasids' period. He was born in Egypt but lived in Baghdad for some time. He was also known for improvised yet eloquent poems that were full of enthusiasm and passion.

make them a great source for Baghdad's historiography. Al-Tamimi passed away in Baghdad in the year 1261/1845. He was buried in Al-Kadhemiyya in the western side of Baghdad, 12 kilometres north of Karkh.

5.2 The Alternative Method and the Interpretation Techniques

The investigation of the main topics and objectives of the writings of the three scholars (Al-Uzari, Al-Suwaidi and Al-Tamimi) indicates a variety of valuable concepts that have potential to promote a better understanding of Baghdad's urban history during that period. These concepts are examined in this chapter according to the principles of the new method in historiography, the *infinite interlocking interpretation*. This method suggests a combination, comparison and interconnection of ideas, in order to accomplish three aims: advancement in history, enrichment of our understanding of the past, and a complete vision of the historical experience. The thematic approach that was utilised in Chapter Four is also applied in this chapter. Thus, rather than examining the poems or narratives of each scholar separately, they are studied in relation to fundamental themes and spaces, in relation to the urban history of Baghdad.

Although they employ different techniques to interpret a variety of subjects and spaces, an overall reading of the selected texts²¹ collectively focus on the theme of beauty and loveliness. Beauty in these texts encompasses a number of measures that are either shown independently or combined collectively. The key measures of beauty are natural beauty, social beauty and architectural beauty. The appreciation of the river's environment and greenery is signified in relation to its natural and social beauties. On the other hand, schools, mosques, markets and houses are represented as social and architectural beauties. Yet, the whole city is pictured within these texts as a combination of all these types of beauty. It is remarkable that the measure of beauty is shown in texts as a powerful tool to evoke nostalgic and spatial impressions. By utilising beauty as an answer to a specific difficulty, or to clarify the real meaning of things, the images drawn by texts combine both analogies and contrasting images, which convey more meaning to the observer of the text.

Unlike the evident focus on all dimensions of beauty in this literature, conventional historiography generally advocates only one dimension of beauty, the architectural measure. These sources appreciate architectural motifs of houses and mosques, but pay little attention to other types of beauty. Considering the investigation of beauty and aesthetics that was applied in Chapter Two, it is crucial to specify the meaning of beauty that is implemented in this representation. Current methods in historiography agree consistently on the great amount of truth that is embodied in the visual forms that present beauty. Yet, they differ in establishing ways to define or link physical beauty with soulful (or spiritual) beauty. The crucial viable that creates these differences and multiple interpretations is the deliberate separation between material and soulful beauties. While moral theory links beauty solely to metaphysical or abstract effects, empirical theory focuses on the space between the forms and it transforms these spaces to substantive elements. On the other hand, subjective theory combines material and spiritual beauties and considers art works an embodiment of both dimensions.

²¹ Due to the limited capacity of this thesis, texts that represent multiple concepts of urban history are selected.

Indeed, sometimes material beauty is the first element recognised when expressing beauty, yet at other times the recognition of beauty requires other measures that cannot be concrete. For example, social beauty and affection are governed by other elements, such as values, beliefs and friendship. Also historical acts imply that one kind of beauty cannot be understood separately from other kinds. For instance, in the texts that are examined in this chapter, social beauty comprises many tangible and intangible elements, including learning institutes, natural features, the perception of the city as a whole, and human relationships. I believe considering the soul to be the result of a substantial movement in matter brings more validity to the interlocking criteria between them, by decreasing their differences. This interconnection between material and spiritual beauties is important to the method of urban historiography, since it attains more openness to a variety of meanings.

The question of the meanings and measures of beauty raises another question: does beauty have a capacity to be enclosed in a particular place, or is it an absolute actuality that has no geographical limits? In other words, does the definition of beauty relate to a specific location or is it an abstract entity that embraces all locations unconditionally? The answer to this question depends on the method of comprehending all dimensions of beauty, and how these dimensions are dealt with. If a specific location is understood as having a material beauty with a soul, then the measures of the beauty of the soul become a secondary factor that relies on physical beauty. Whereas, if the same location is understood as a soul that encompasses material qualities, the beauty of the soul reflects on material beauty, yet this reflection can take two opposite directions of good and bad, depending on the soul itself. The extent of the beauty of the soul is totally dependent on other factors, including valuing natural laws, considering the power of God, and appreciating other immaterial qualities in addition to material qualities. Therefore, although the meaning of beauty is a universal meaning that incorporates all locations in the world, the spiritual dimension of each place determines the degree of beauty, yet also remains dependent on equal attention given to all other measures. In this context, all measures of beauty become real, and no single measure is considered imaginative or abstract.

The literature and poetry of Baghdad during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries emphasises different measures of beauty. These measures are explored in this chapter in association with architectural and urban spaces in eighteenth and nineteenth century Baghdad, which are overlooked in conventional historiography. These spaces include the river environment, the meaning of gardens, teaching institutes, social aspects of houses, in addition to the image of the whole city. This categorisation does not anticipate restricting beauty to the physical domain; rather it intends to discover the spiritual beauty of these objects, since this measure precedes the material measure and persists regardless of occasional changes of physical beauties. The representation of these texts in this study is proposed as an illustration of art works, which have significant individual qualities. Hence, the interpretation credits the individual qualities of the represented text, but it suggests the outcomes of this investigation as an aid for a general understanding of history.

5.3 Representing Ignored Nostalgic and Spatial Themes

The comparison between conventional methods and the alternative method necessitates an investigation of their techniques, by examining the gaps in conventional historiography. These gaps are either presented as themes, such as integral beauty, or presented as spaces,

such as Karkh and the river environment. The alternative method examines the common urban components of conventional historiography, such as markets, mosques and houses. These urban spaces are interpreted according to the principles of the alternative method. The outcomes of this interpretation are compared with conventional interpretations, in order to obtain an awareness of more aspects of those spaces. This comparison is an important step towards inclusive understanding of the urban history of Baghdad in this period.

5.3.1 Measures of Beauty of the Whole City of Baghdad

This section investigates the notion of beauty and its three measures (material, spiritual and social beauties) in the literature and poetry of late eighteenth and early nineteenth century Baghdad. The aim is to outline the characteristics of Baghdad and to reconstruct the image that is drawn by these texts. Since conventional historiography presents a gloomy and unattractive image of the city, I found it crucial to explore the reflection of the whole city of Baghdad in the literature and poetry of the selected period for this study, before representing particular spaces of the city. It is important to note that the name Baghdad in this literature, was sometimes associated with the eastern part of Baghdad only, and was linked to the two parts of Baghdad (Karkh and Rusafa) at other times. This makes it difficult to designate which part of Baghdad is illustrated in specific literature or poetry. Although I will only quote certain lines from these texts, the meaning and the exact locale is extracted from the reading of the full texts. On the other hand, the western side of Baghdad was known as Karkh in the eighteenth and nineteenth century, and therefore, it was indicated clearly in texts. This variety offers an excellent opportunity for a better understanding of Baghdad's history.

In a poem that was composed to praise the community leader Suleiman Al-Shawi, Al-Uzari highlights the beautiful image of Baghdad in late eighteenth century. This poetry represents the beauty of the city throughout different stages in history. The image of Baghdad depicted in this text refers to both sides of the city, and this image represents all aspects of beauty. However, by using metaphoric elements linked to natural beauty to represent the city, and by expressing sadness in relation to losing loved ones, the poem suggests an unequal span of the measures of beauty at that time.

If you mention beautiful places in the area
Do not forget the crescents of *Zawra*'
This homeland overflows with beauty from its sides
The beauty pours like rain that pours from the sky
I wonder if this is only a city or is it heaven on earth!
Or is it a rosy cheek of a beautiful girl!
I ask you my friends; will the good times ever come back?
And would the calm shade be delivered again by the grand green tree!
I salute those wonderful nights from the past
They were bright and full of dignity and eminence²²

²² Shukur (ed.), *Dewan Al-Uzari Al-Kabeer*, pp. 59-60. The Arabic transcript is as follows:

وأذا ذكرت حديث رب رب ضارج	لا تنس ذكر أهلة الزوراء
بلد يفور الحسن من جنباته	فوران غيث من عيون سماء
هي بلدة أم جنة أم وجنة	شرقت بماء الدمية الأدماء
يا أهل ودي هل يفى زماننا	فيعود في الدوحة الخضراء
حي اللويلات التي سلفت لنا	ما بين سالفتي سنى و سناء

In this poem Al-Uzari draws a magnificent image of the Baghdad region, and reveals a view of beauty that is different to the conventional picture, and to the impression of travellers in the eighteenth century, who refer to a damaged and unappealing city appearance²³. The description of Baghdad as paradise indicates infinite beauty that surrounds both sides of the city. In addition to the exceptional spiritual and natural beauties, this poem refers to nostalgic historical beauty. Al-Uzari calls it 'Zawra' instead of Baghdad, which is linked to the thriving round city, which was built in the eighth century. While this historical city demonstrated negative aspects in the history of Baghdad, its spiritual image was perpetuated in peoples' minds, reminding them of a great history.

Although the poem begins with a description of beauty in all its dimensions, Al-Uzari ends the poem by expressing a deep sorrow for the loss of good people. This loss that reduced social beauty (the beauty of social gathering with friendly and noble people) had a great impact on the beauty of the whole city. The poem does not indicate architectural beauty directly; but outlining the image of the whole city implies architectural beauty that is interconnected with other measures. Nevertheless, the image of the late eighteenth century city drawn in this poetry suggests a high level of soulful beauty, represented by the natural landscape and famous history. It also indicates certain nostalgic themes of love, longing and attachment, while incorporating courage and dignity, which relate to social beauty. Physical beauty is interconnected indirectly in these poems, which suggests that the other two measures have priority in Al-Uzari's vision.

The retreat of social beauty in the late eighteenth century, due to a great loss of people is also indicated in Al-Suwaidi's literature. He mentions the consequences of the plague in Baghdad in 1772, which forced him to leave Baghdad with his family to survive the epidemic. He expresses his longing, pain and the distress of losing his friends. He associates the beauty of Baghdad with the survival of good people, stating that when the righteous people died out, all kinds of beauty disappeared. In addition, Al-Suwaidi utilises the plague incident as a symbol of the bad political situation at that time. He proposes that the plague has killed all good people and left bad people alive to take control of everything:

When plague hit Baghdad and Basra areas, and good men became extinct, and authority was taken by people who don't deserve it, and everything was put in the wrong place, the beauties vanished. Now, after living in peace for a long time, we are drinking stinking water. I feel that previous nights are like clouds that were cleared away, or an illusion that disappeared rapidly. I also feel that those past nights were like dreams, and the beauties were showing in my sleep, or they were like a shadow that expanded then shrank, or an imaginative idea that came and went quickly, or a plant that grew up then it was suddenly cut off. I thought of this life and its unstable situation of good and bad times, and ... I found out that being attached to it is the starting point of parting with it. I also found out that dissimulating it is hypocrisy; its water is extremely bitter, and its properties and ownerships are abandonments²⁴.

²³ See Chapter Six for more details.

²⁴ Ra'of (ed.), *Tarekh hawadeth Baghdad wal Basrah*, pp. 41-42. The original Arabic poem is as follows:
 "ولما حل في هذه البقاع الطاعون، وانقرض الرجال الصالحون، ووسد الأمر إلى غير أهله، ووضع كل شيء في غير محله، زالت تلك المحاسن،
 وشربنا بعد الصفاء من الأكدار الماء الأسن، فكان تلك الأيام كانت سحاباً ثم انقشع، وسراباً بلع ثم انقطع، وكان تلك الليالي كانت أحلاماً، وتلك

These statements express how social beauty affected Al-Suwaidi's perception of place. Besides the permanent loss of sincere people, for Al-Suwaidi, being away from Baghdad meant losing the beauties of life in his opinion, since this city represented all sorts of beauty. Al-Suwaidi describes peaceful times as sweet water, yet this water became 'stinking' after these disasters. Al-Suwaidi describes the taste of water as bitter, using this metaphor to refer to the taste of life in general. The association of the conditions of life with the purity and contamination of water indicates its great effect on people, since it symbolises life. Although the taste of water did not actually change, Al-Suwaidi describes it as impure. This reveals how the alteration of one measure of beauty interacts with people's imagination to invert truth, and controls their perception of similar things in different ways. It also reveals the solid links between all aspects of beauty, along with the great influence they have on each other.

While in Basra, Al-Suwaidi wrote many poems about Baghdad. These poems referred to the city as a whole, and did not focus on its two main areas, the eastern and western parts. This indicates that despite the differences between both parts of the city, when people leave, the two are perceived as a whole, which shows some similarities between them. These texts also show that the connections between both parts of Baghdad strengthened towards the end of the eighteenth century. Once again Al-Suwaidi associated his love of the city with his loving friends, which confirms the integral effects of social beauty on all other dimensions of beauty.

For Baghdad I long greatly
 So please *Abu Faraj* prepare the she-camels
 And take me there in the dark night without delay or any preparation
 And do not wait for travelling companions
 If the condition is urgent and if someone like me feels greatly irritated
 He will not wait for a companion
 I mentioned my loved ones and my longing increased
 My love reached the highest limit, like the soul that reaches the throat of a dying person²⁵

In this poem, Al-Suwaidi expresses nostalgic themes of love and longing for his home city, Baghdad. The poem expresses a great deal of suffering and emotions, which is conveyed through an imaginative trip back to Baghdad. In the last line, he used the word *fawaq*²⁶ to express his urgent need to go back to Baghdad, otherwise, he will die soon. Al-Suwaidi borrowed this word from the Qur'an, where it indicates the definite punishment given to bad people after they die, as they have no chance to be brought back to life²⁷. The use of these meanings from the Qur'an indicates the great knowledge of and attachment to the Qur'an teachings at that time. These texts by Al-Uzari and Al-Suwaidi outline a number of qualities of Baghdad unrecognised in conventional historiography. These qualities include the greenery and the impressive environment of the river, the strong social relationships and the

المحاسن كانت مناما، أو كأنها ظل امتد ثم ارتد، أو خيال طرق ثم انطلق، أو نبات نجم ثم انصرم، فتأملت هذه الدنيا في انتلافها واختلافها، ومواتها وانحرافها، ووجدت وصالها فراقا، ونفاقها نفاقا، وماءها زعاقا، وأملأها طلاقا"

²⁵ Ra'of (ed.), *Tarekh hawadeth Baghdad wal Basrah*, p. 51. The original Arabic poem is as follows:

الى بغداد أشتاق اشتياقا	فقدم لي أبا فرج النياقا
وسر بي في ظلام الليل عسفا	ولانتظر لمسراك الرفاقا
فمتلي غير منتظر رفيقا	إذا ما الأمر كان عليه ضاقا
ذكرت أحبتي فازداد شوقي	وقد بلغت من المقة الفواقا

²⁶ A metaphoric meaning of the suffering of the loss of the soul and the impossibility of getting back to life.

²⁷ The Qur'an, chapter 38, verse 15.

educated society, and above all, the great love for and attachment to this land, along with the great appreciation of its beauty.

In addition to social and natural beauties that are expressed intensely in these texts, specific architectural qualities of domes are outlined by this literature to offer multiple aspects of beauty. On one hand, the domes are associated with the image of the whole city as an identifier of its unique character. On the other hand, domes are linked to all other measures of beauty, including social, material and spiritual beauties. For example, Al-Uzari considers domes the main elements that give identity to his homeland. He pictures the city as one home that constitutes many inviting domes.

Oh home of my beloved, I wish that your domes stay close to the youth
His distance prevented every hope he had²⁸

Al-Uzari associates the familiarity of these forms with hope and comfort, in addition to friendship and love. This association signifies the symbolic meaning of domes that make a place comfortable, embracing and safe. In another poem, Al-Uzari depicts the neighbourhoods of dearly loved people as places of shelter and refuge. He also relates sadness and worthlessness of place to the destruction of domes, and describes the integral role of domes in Baghdadi society in the late eighteenth century.

Is there a place similar to those protecting clubs?
They guard the guest and quench his thirst!
My beloved ones promised to leave at night, and they kept their promises
What a terrible fulfilment of that painful promise!
The *Uthaib* [River] which has never been abandoned, is now deserted
The demolition of those domes forced them to leave that valley²⁹

Al-Uzari expresses his deep sorrow towards losing lovely and brave people after a plague. The description of neighbourhoods as clubs of protection, and locations of gentle breeze, is among the amazing pictures of the city drawn by Al-Uzari. The poem relates to the whole cluster of houses as effectively one entity. This unified vision that integrates all aspects of domes, and views architectural components collectively, shows the importance of interlocking all aspects of the urban experience to attain a unified comprehensive understanding of that experience. In a third poem, Al-Uzari utilises the meanings of domes and crescents, such as highness, compassion, visual appeal, reception and protection, to identify noble and dignified people. Those people had gone forever, but their refreshing fragrance persisted and raised the level of beauty of the place.

I sacrifice my father for the sake of these crescents in the domes³⁰
With their brightness, they decorated these roofs with a circuit made of turquoise
I say to the land where they were remembered

²⁸ Shukur (ed.), *Dewan Al-Uzari Al-Kabeer*, p. 249. The Arabic script is as follows:

يادار لابعدت قبائك عن فتى سد البعاد عليه كل سداد

²⁹ Shukur (ed.), *Dewan Al-Uzari Al-Kabeer*, pp. 198-205. The Arabic script is as follows:

هل بعد أندية الحمى من ناد يحمى النزىل بها ويروى الصادي
وعدوا الرحيل عشية ووفوا به بئس الوفاء لذلك الميعاد
وخلا العذيب فما خلا مذ قوضت تلك القباب عريب ذاك الوادي

³⁰ This is a symbolic meaning. The poet does not mean sacrificing his father literally; he points out the dignity and high ethics of those people, to a degree that one would sacrifice his most precious people for their sake.

The fragrant breeze carries their scent so enjoy this aroma³¹

Al-Uzari states that lovely people would embellish the domes and bless the land below them with their fragrance. He relates visual beauty and aromas to knowledge and dignity rather than to material elements. These various illustrations of domes show the great capacity of architectural beauty to interconnect with other measures of beauty and heighten affection and attachment to place.

The historian Al-Suwaidi raises another meaning of domes. He expresses the sorrow he felt when he returned to Baghdad after the plague struck. The beautiful images of Baghdad that occupied Al-Suwaidi's imagination for his entire life, especially when he was away from it, completely changed when he went back. He felt that since the plague had killed many of the good people that lived there, the beauty which he had perceived in Baghdad was gone. He borrows the idea of the dome to describe tranquillity in life, yet he accuses life for all the sad things he has experienced, and advises people never to trust it. Al-Suwaidi employs symbolism to represent the illusory images of life. The domes are not represented as mere architectural forms; rather they are shown as sanctuaries and peaceful figures. This interpretation reflects the multiple meaning of domes.

I am convinced that the one who is deceived by it is in danger, so is the one who is attached to it and keep holding its ropes, which are similar to spider threads or weaker. I think that whoever seeks refuge in its domes, he resembles the one who is kissing a lion, because he has lost his brain completely³².

Unfortunately, the marvellous beauty of eighteenth century Baghdad was destroyed in the later decades of the century, because of the great diminishing in social beauty, due to the epidemic. However, the beautiful picture of the city in the texts of Al-Uzari and Al-Suwaidi has expanded to the nineteenth century, with more improvement and little distraction, since the nineteenth century witnessed fewer epidemics and more redevelopment projects. The poet Saleh Al-Tamimi illustrates the image of Baghdad in the early decades of the nineteenth century. This image encompasses all components of natural beauty, including greenery and water. It also indicates an overall beauty of the city, which suggests the inclusion of all measure of beauty.

The heavy rain is travelling between the valleys
And it meanders through low grounds and highlands
I witness that beauty has no limit
Yet there is no parallel to the beauty of Baghdad in the eye of the observer³³

³¹ Shukur (ed.), *Dewan Al-Uzari Al-Kabeer*, pp. 111-112. The Arabic script is as follows:

بأبي الأهله في القباب كأنما
سمكوا لها فلكا من الفيروز
وأقول للأرض التي ذكروا بها
هذا النسيم نسيمهم فتأرجي

³² Ra'of (ed.), *Tarekh hawadeth Baghdad wal Basrah*, pp. 41-42. The original Arabic poem is as follows:

"ورأيت المغتر بها على شرف غرر، والعجب بنعيمها على شفا خطر، والمتعلق بحبالها كالمعلق بنسيج العنكب بل بأوهن منه وأوهي، والسكن الى قبابها كمعانق الأسد بل أجن وأجنى"

³³ Al-Ameen M. 1951, *A'yan Al-Shi'a*, vol. 7, viewed 2 June 2013.

<http://www.alhikmeh.org/main/pages/tex_new.php?tid=2728>. The original Arabic poem is as follows:

صب تنقل من واد إلى وادي
وهام ما بين أغوار وأنجاد
والحسن لا يتناهى في الورى وأرى
لا يملأ العين الا حسن بغداد

Although this poem emphasises all aspects of beauty, it indicates a development in architectural and social beauties, in addition to natural beauty. Al-Tamimi wonders about the reasons for this beauty, and if it is allied with any spiritual beauty, such as a revelation. Yet, he soon answers himself, and declares that no revelation occurred there. He admits the one who stays in Baghdad obtains eternity and fame, and verifies that specific beautiful characteristics of place are sustenance from God. This poem shows the outstanding beauty of the city, in all measures, which made the poet wonder about the unseen willpower to sustain the intimate relationships of all dimensions of beauty.

There is certain sustenance for its seekers on this earth
 This is a promise and a pledge from God
 No one mentioned that a revelation took place in Baghdad
 Yet I acknowledge that the one who stays in this city is a forerunner to eternity³⁴

In relation to the interpretation of domes in the texts of the early nineteenth century, similar meanings were conveyed to those of the late eighteenth century texts. However, due to the decrease in epidemics in this period (which lowered the death rate) the representation of domes in the nineteenth century was associated with loftiness and prestige, rather than longing and remembrance. The following poem describes *Jami'* Al-Haiderkhana in Baghdad, beautifully decorated during the rule of Dawud *pasha* (Figure 26).

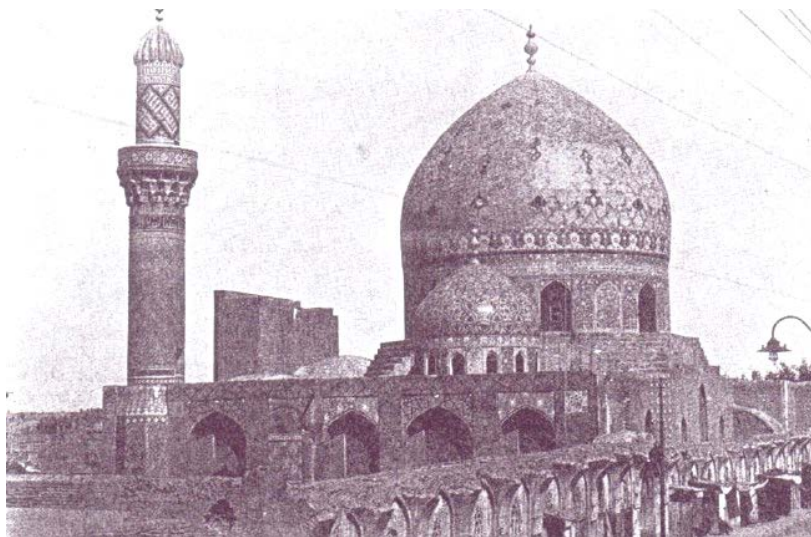


Figure 26: Al-Haiderkhana mosque [Coke 1927]

A big high dome was built above the prayer area, accompanied by two small domes. The poem refers to the domes indirectly, by indicating vast, high spaces.

This *jami'* [mosque] is among the houses of Allah that were raised high
 For the worshippers to perform glorification and gratitude

³⁴ Al-Ameen, A'yan Al-Shi'a. The original Arabic poem is as follows:

وعد من الله بل عهد وميثاق
 ان المقيم بها للخلد سباق

في منكب الأرض للساعين أرزاق
 لا مهبط الوحي بغداد ولا ذكروا

The building was founded on the basis of piety and honesty
He who built it is knowledgeable, patient, fair and generous³⁵

To sum up, the textual representation carried out in this section, suggested 'integral beauty' as one of the ignored urban themes in conventional historiography. The reading of the poetry and historical narratives of Al-Uzari and Al-Suwaidi provides another image of eighteenth century Baghdad. This image constitutes exclusive beauty in all dimensions. However, these texts emphasise social beauty over other aspects, and demonstrated the tragic consequences of the epidemic, which diminished it. The interpretation of domes in these texts goes beyond the limits of the physical form, since the meaning is interconnected with other social attributes that made the domes dynamic, a means of interaction between people, and symbols of high standards and love. The interpretation of domes in these texts expands to embrace all aspects of beauty, facility and loveliness.

The image of the early nineteenth century, represented in the poetry of Al-Tamimi, also encompasses high measures of beauty. Yet this image of the nineteenth century is more contented, which suggests an equal increase in all measures of beauty. The interpretation of the city in these texts used a number of interconnected elements and themes. It contradicts the gloomy images of conventional historiography that employs physical beauty as the only measure of beauty, and refers to political complexities rather than social and spiritual aspects of place. The multiple meaning of domes in the literature of this period, also contradicts conventional understanding of these forms, which limits their meaning basically to architectural elements and visual arts.

5.3.2 The Representation of Karkh

This section investigates the western part of Baghdad (or Karkh) as one of the ignored spaces in conventional historiography. The latter does not often take account of Karkh as a remarkable component of Baghdad's urban history. As the eastern part of Baghdad was always the hub for successive governments, it had been surrounded with defensive walls since the Abbasid period. Consequently, this sector held the name Baghdad for a long time. However, the western side was also occupied since the Abbasid period, but its population was less than the population of the eastern side, and it did not have defensive walls until the eighteenth century. The situation in eastern Baghdad became unpleasant in the late eighteenth century, because of additional tension and consistent fighting. These conditions caused an expansive move outside the eastern section, and many people decided to move to Karkh where there was more freedom and less tension; Al-Uzari was among those people. Although he left his birth-place (where he also spent his youth) Al-Uzari considered Karkh his home. This indicates the great role of social happiness in establishing affection and attachment to a particular site, and how integral beauty generates feelings of belonging. However, Al-Uzari maintained an appreciation of both sides, believing that they constituted one whole unit.

I send my tributes to those places that were lively
We enjoyed living there and the rain was pouring constantly

³⁵ Ra'of (ed.), *Al-Iqd Al-Lami' bi athar Baghdad wal masajed wal jawame'*, p.243. The Arabic script is as follows:

لذاكرين بتسبيح وتحميد	ذا من بيوت بأذن الله قد رفعت
ذو العلم والحلم والأنصاف والجرود	على تقى الله بالأخلاص أسسه

It is great to have Karkh as my home and to have my loved ones as neighbours
And to have people who are pleased if I am pleased and who are hurt if I am hurt³⁶

The beauty of Karkh is also indicated in the narratives of Al-Suwaidi. Although he was born in the western side of Baghdad, he had to move to the fully-fortified eastern side during a siege that took place in 1156/1743. He stayed in Jami' Al-Aqli; one of the mosques of eastern Baghdad that are close to the Tigris River. For Al-Suwaidi, the two sides are not similar, and this move caused a lot of suffering and difficulties for him and his fifteen year old brother. He expresses his longing for Karkh in the following statement:

I woke up one night before dawn and felt longing for Karkh and for the dawn
prayer within those remains. My ample tears flowed and they were about to
develop into blood³⁷

This statement shows the great joy Al-Suwaidi felt while living in Karkh, where natural beauty, social relations, and freedom drew a lovely image of the city, despite architectural conditions that he describes as 'remains'. Having less connection with the society of eastern Baghdad, and comparing the enclosed, dense city that had few open spaces and less freedom, with the western part, he felt deep sadness and wept constantly. Al-Suwaidi remembers the call for *fajr* (dawn) prayer as if there was not such a call in the eastern part, showing the happiness he experienced in Karkh made him perceive similar calls differently. He mentions the call for this prayer specifically because the call at dawn signifies peace and tranquillity. In this case, natural and social beauty dominated Al-Suwaidi's inner imagination. He also expresses the hardship of being apart from Karkh in poetry:

Oh my friend, go to Karkh and stay in its deserted places
Then ask it in what way did beautiful people leave it!
When I lived in Karkh it was full of righteous people
Groups of friends were gathering in its clubs
So, what happened? And why did people desolate it?
And where are the old imprints and the high buildings?
Oh, I miss the whole area of the west river-side
The eastern side is pleasant but it is not similar to it
I beg you, my friend to stand there like a flag
And do the same thing I did on the day I left
When lots of tears were pouring down onto my cheeks³⁸

³⁶ Shukur (ed.), *Dewan Al-Uzari Al-Kabeer*, p. 19. The Arabic script is as follows:

سلام على تلك المغاني التي بها
إذا الكرخ داري والأحبة جبرتي
نعمن وحياها من المزن صيب
وقومي ترضى أن رضيت وتغضب

³⁷ Ra'of (ed.), *Tarekh hawadeth Baghdad wal Basrah*, p. 25. The Arabic script is as follows:

"وقد انتهت سحر بعض الليالي فاشتقت الى الكرخ وصلاة الفجر بين هاتيك الأطلال، فجرى دمي توأما وكاد أن يكون دما"

³⁸ Ra'of (ed.), *Tarekh hawadeth Baghdad wal Basrah*, pp. 25-26. The original Arabic poem is as follows:

عرج على الكرخ وانزل في مغانيه	واسأله كيف خلت منه غواني
عهدي به وهو معمور بسادته	وجملة الصحب كانوا في نوادي
فماله ذهب أصحابه وعفت	آثاره وخوت منه أعاليه
لهفي على الجانب الغربي أجمعه	فجانب الشرق طيبا لايدانيه
بالله قف بدلي فيه كسارية	ولم تزل من صدى التفريق ترويه
وقف وقوفي به يوم الرحيل ضحي	حيث العقيق على الخدين أجريه

It is striking how the western side of Baghdad, or Karkh, engaged both Al-Uzari and Al-Suwaidi and created a deep love and pleasure. This love was tested in the case of separation, and caused great pain and suffering for both scholars. In the late eighteenth century, the region of Karkh had typical Baghdadi neighbourhoods, with more farms and greenery, and few fine buildings. On the other hand, the eastern side used to have ‘the most excellent and moderate architecture’³⁹ (Figures 27, 28). This indicates that the solitary advantage of excellent architecture is not capable of building strong connections to people, and therefore, cannot be the only representative of beauty. Thus, affection and attachment to place cannot be achieved unless a ‘balance’ between all dimensions of beauty is maintained.

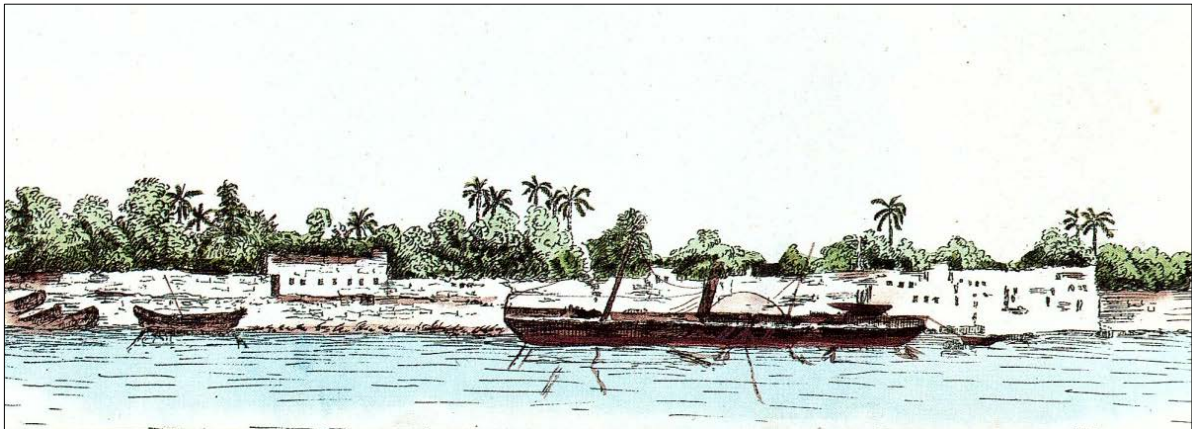


Figure 27: A sketch of the western side of Baghdad showing extensive greenery [Jones 1998]

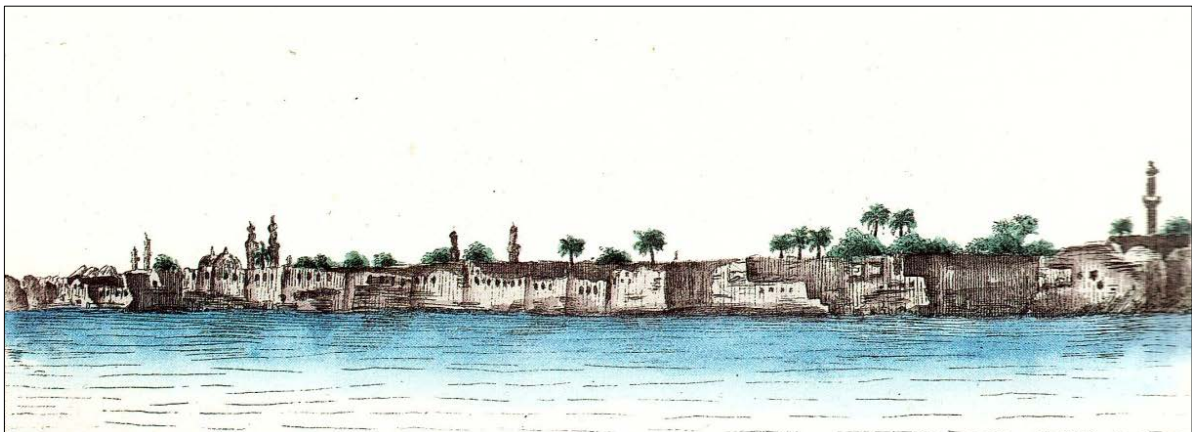


Figure 28: A sketch of the eastern side of Baghdad showing less greenery and more architectural components [Jones 1998]

³⁹ Ra'of (ed.), *Akhbaar Baghdad wa ma jawaraha min Al-Bilad* , p. 107.

Al-Suwaidi illustrates the integral beauty and splendour of Karkh in this poem:

When I left Karkh it was full of joy
 As all people gathered with happiness
 Everywhere in Karkh was illuminated with bright lights
 And the flowers and the fragmented trees spread in every direction
 The *Saba* [eastern wind] sustains life in your soul
 With its concealed fragrance which is originated in the land
 And the birds on the trees sing with joy
 And the tender branches move with the breeze⁴⁰

Al-Suwaidi relates happiness to social and natural beauties, which assert the prevailing effects of these two measures, over other aspects. This poem, and much of the literature of this period, exclusively signifies the loveliness of Karkh. The textual analysis outlined in Chapter Four, in addition to these texts, suggests Karkh as a constant locale of beauty since the Abbasid period. Conversely, the beauty of the eastern sides fluctuated throughout the history of Baghdad, depending on various circumstances. In addition, these texts indicate a decrease in the integral beauty of the eastern side in the late eighteenth century. However, in the nineteenth century, the conditions on this side became relatively better. This was reflected in the literature. The poems illustrate the freedom of movement between both sides of Baghdad, and indicate how the Tigris River acted as a linking element rather than a means of separation. Though with more truthful friends and less traitors around, both Al-Uzari and Al-Suwaidi are rather pleased to live in Karkh and consider it home.

The representation in this section depicted Karkh as an area of constant beauty that combines natural, spiritual and social beauties. It appears that the historical clash between constant beauties and transitory beauty mainly relates to physical features which influence the understanding of the urban history to a great extent. This emphasises the importance of the alternative method in identifying the absences in this history, to advance understanding.

5.3.3 Attractive Qualities of the Tigris River

This section is dedicated to exploring the social aspects of Baghdad in poems and historical narratives. This investigation implements the objectives of the proposed method (*infinite interlocking interpretation*) by using interconnection, comparison and vertical reading of history to study possible resources. The conventional understanding of social aspects of Ottoman cities and of Baghdad in the eighteenth and nineteenth century is typically associated with particular public settings. These settings include schools, mosques and markets. However, the reading of the literature of this period expands these settings to include other forms. These include the river-banks, open gardens and coffee shops, in addition to houses that were partially transformed into venues for cultural fora.

⁴⁰ Ra'of (ed.), *Tarekh hawadeth Baghdad wal Basrah*, pp. 25-26. The original Arabic poem is as follows:

عهدي به وهو محفوف بكل هنا	والشمل مجتمع والسعد تاويه
والنور والنور في أرجائه سطعا	والورد والاس تاها في نواحيه
وللصبا أرح تحيا النفوس به	مما على الأرض عطر كامن فيه
والطير فوق أصول البان في طرب	والغصن بالخود يزري في تثنيه

Baghdad is considered the cultural mediator between northern and southern Iraq, and is at the point where the two great rivers (Euphrates and Tigris) are close to each other. The study of the urban morphology of Baghdad indicates a strong connection to the edge of the river. The urban history of Baghdad was associated with the Tigris River from the establishment of the first settlement around 3000 years ago. The Tigris River, which passes through Baghdad, has been a major collective icon of the city's historical events. Being at the edge of the river, which provides the central artery for its growth, the city's development was influenced significantly by the waterway. This urban corridor provides aesthetics, irrigation, security, and transportation. It also secures symbolic characteristics related to the place, such as the sunshine and sunset, the night with its moon and stars⁴¹. It has also been a source of inspiration for poets throughout the city's history to the extent that almost all scholars cited the river in their works.

Throughout history, the Tigris River has been a major eternal element of the city, since it coexisted with other elements that contributed to shaping the city and its identity. For example, the first urban settlement emerged as a market village on the Tigris River. Also because the first planned city of Baghdad (or the round city) could not survive for long as it wasn't built directly on the river. Soon after its foundation, new blocks began to grow around the walled quarters towards the river, where people retained proximity to the waterway and freedom of trade. The outer settlements by the river grew rapidly; therefore, the river is a crucial element of this city's urban continuity. However, these qualities are not emphasised in conventional historiography. Instead, conventional sources represent the river as an adversity, due to its recurrent flooding⁴². In contrast, literature and poetry convey attractive images of the river, and highlight its significance as a source of perfect beauty and prosperity.

One of the significant components of the urban history of Baghdad in relation to the river is the only bridge that existed in the region for centuries. The connection offered by this bridge between the two parts of Baghdad signified it as a unique component in the urban history of Baghdad. The bridge is briefly presented in conventional historiography, through a description of its substantial components⁴³. On the other hand, the analysis of literature and poetry of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries indicates other qualities of the bridge, which will be explored in this section. It is worth noting that there was another bridge in northern Baghdad at that time. That bridge connected Al-Kadhemiyya and A'dhamiyya districts, but because these areas were autonomous then, the bridge of Baghdad sustained its position as the main link between both sides of Baghdad. Due to the unstable structure of the bridge, it needed constant maintenance to prevent breakages caused by strong winds or high water level. However, the bridge sustained eventual damages⁴⁴, and boats were used to transfer people between the two sides, since it was the only bridge at that time (Figure 29). In the late nineteenth century, after the demolition of the walls of Baghdad and the expansion of many

⁴¹ Makkiyya (ed.), *Baghdad*, p. 283.

⁴² Ahmed Susa explains that a number of dams were built throughout the history of Baghdad to control floods. He notes that in the eighteenth century, the lack of maintenance of the old dams caused recurrent overflows, which brought great damage to the urban landscape. See Susa, A 1968, 'Ray Baghdad, qadeeman wa hadeethan', in *Baghdad*, Jawad, Susa, Ma'ruf & Makkiyya, Iraqi Engineers Association with Gubenkian Foundation, Baghdad, pp. 86-123.

⁴³ This bridge consisted of about 34 boats tightened together with strong ropes.

⁴⁴ Al-Suwaidi narrates an incident when the bridge was inoperative for about a month because of the damage of one of its thirty four boats. See Ra'of (ed.), *Tarekh hawadeth Baghdad wal Basrah*, p. 107.

neighbourhoods, another bridge was built, to support the intensity of movement due to the limited capacity of the single bridge⁴⁵.

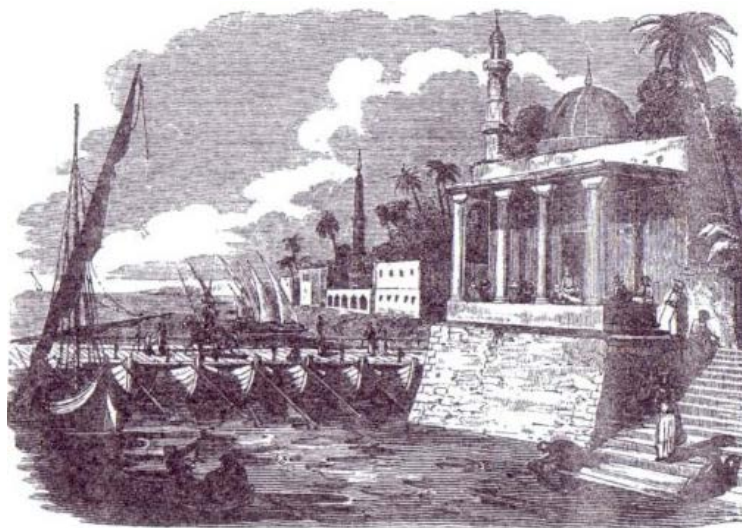


Figure 29: The boat bridge of Baghdad [Alexander 1928]

The textual representation in this section confirms the Tigris River and the bridge as representatives of the integral beauty that is “perfected and complete”⁴⁶. Although the river is represented heavily in poetry, it is not always mentioned directly, as many poems illustrate the whole environment of the river. The interrelationship of the Tigris River with all other urban components of Baghdad is a distinctive quality of this river, since the beauty it grants to the land on both sides of Baghdad, and the gentle breeze it creates, established the integral beauty of the whole area. Besides being a source of beauty and purity, the urban literature of Baghdad in this period illustrates the river as a source of love, happiness and blessings.

Al-Uzari indicates this happy atmosphere in a poem dedicated to congratulate Ahmed Al-Shawi on an *Eid*⁴⁷ occasion. He indicates the happy environment of the river indirectly, by using metaphoric clues of rich and fertile land, to commend this leader.

The earth is gratified with its noble and generous inhabitants; it dances happily
 Delighted for the richness and countless blessings which fill it
 This entire beauty is a result of his determination
 The same way stunning gardens are the products of plentiful rain⁴⁸

⁴⁵ Ra'of (ed.), *Akhbaar Baghdad wa ma jawaraha min Al-Bilad*, p. 140.

⁴⁶ Cooperson, 'Baghdad in rhetoric and narrative', pp 99-113.

⁴⁷ *Eid* is a special happy event for Muslims. The two major annual *Eids* are associated with fasting and Hajj celebrations.

⁴⁸ Shukur (ed.), *Dewan Al-Uzari Al-Kabeer*, p. 501. The Arabic script is as follows:

والأرض راقصة بساكنها	فرحا بمائها من النعم
كل الجميل نتاج همته	ان الرياض ولأند الديم

In addition, to a happy and cheerful land, this poem mentions beautiful gardens and heavy rain. These elements of a perfect natural landscape reflect the river's footprint, and the prosperous environment it creates. Another poem by Al-Uzari assigns additional meaning to the river, by considering it a source of relief and tranquility. Al-Uzari recalls the positive characteristics of Baghdad's atmosphere, in order to overcome some harmful events that had resulted in a great loss of loved ones. He reminds himself of the wonderful neighbourhoods that were full of mild breezes approaching from the river's surface.

The houses of my loved ones are empty
 And the antelopes are scattered in the valley
 Oh God I can't forget those lovely places
 With the fragrant breeze that comes from the aromatic trees
 I wouldn't be able to control my grief without remembering those beautiful Babylonian eyes
 Walking elegantly and calmly between Euphrates and Tigris⁴⁹

Al-Uzari refers to the happy and calming atmosphere of the city, which undoubtedly relates to the blessings of the nearby river (Figure 30). However, the poems indicate the city was happier when both lovely friends and natural beauty were combined. The poet explains that even though he lost his friends, their fragrance is sustained in that land. This fragrance joins the soft breeze, and fills the place with comfort.

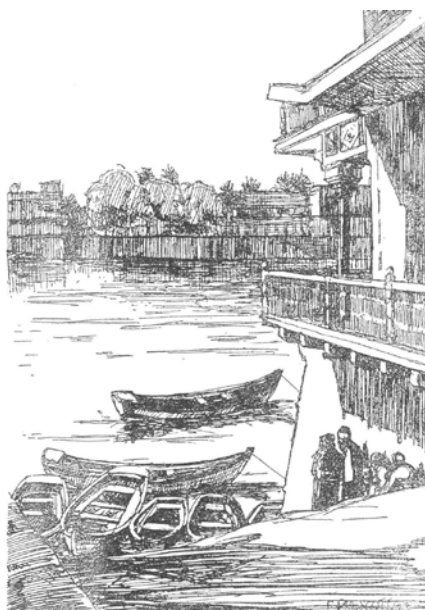


Figure 30: The River's atmosphere [Stark 1947]

⁴⁹ Shukur (ed.), *Dewan Al-Uzari Al-Kabeer*, pp. 198-205. The Arabic script is as follows:

وَتَنَافَرَتْ ظِلِّيَاتُ ذَاكَ الْوَادِي	خَلَّتِ الدِّيَارُ مِنَ الَّذِينَ عَهْدْتُهُمْ
أَذْيَالُهُ بِبِشَامِ ذَاكَ النَّادِي	لِلَّهِ أُنْدِيَّةُ النَّسِيمِ تَعْلَقَتْ
لَمْ تَعْرِفِ الْأَيَّامُ كَيْفَ قِيَادِي	لَوْلَا الْعَيُونُ الْبَابِلِيَّةُ وَيَحْهَا
هَيْفَ الْمَعَاطِفِ مَشِيهِنَ تَهَادِي	سَنَحَتْ لَنَا بَيْنَ الْفَرَاتِ وَدَجَلَةِ

The extensive use of aromatic smells in Al-Uzari's poetry to symbolise honoured souls signifies the complexity of each place, and the importance of considering all measures of beauty in the interpretation process. The Tigris River and its breeze are represented as comforting and reassuring elements in this poem. In addition, Al-Uzari utilises the timeless relationship between beauty and women, as he remembers the lovely Babylonian eyes during that hard time. The multi-dimensions of this beauty that associates historical, spiritual and material beauties gave him hope and strength. He combines this beauty with the loveliness of the river to maintain a positive feeling during hard times.

These ideas of smell and atmosphere, which are related to the spiritual qualities of place, are usually not acceptable as historical evidence in conventional historiography. The Tigris River represents contradictory images of beauty and devastation in history. Yet the devastating effects of the river in flood, which are specifically outlined in conventional sources, are never mentioned in the poetry of Al-Uzari and others. This suggests that the blessings of the river were greater than its negative impacts. Indeed, the whole collection of Al-Uzari's poems is rich in attractive metaphoric pictures of the river's environment. The criteria of the poems and the eloquence of the Arabic language entail meandering representations, yet the main gestures of the river remain explicit. In a poem that praises a leader in Baghdad⁵⁰, Al-Uzari portrays that leader as a moon. He associates the beauty of the moon with a sweet taste and beautiful smell to outline the dignity of that leader.

The beautiful moon makes the heart confused about its great beauty
It cures sickness with its sweet taste
This moon exalted us with the *Saba* [eastern wind]
And granted us with fresh breeze that comes from its attractive characteristics⁵¹

Although the poem does not show direct links to the river, the indication of breeze, beautiful weather, and magnificent sky scenes, designates a specific connection with the river's environment. In the late eighteenth century, eastern Baghdad was enclosed by a defensive wall except at the river's edge⁵², where there were mainly mosques and government buildings. Consequently, the river's space was conceptualised indirectly through the space of the sky and through some narrow lanes that lead to the river's shores. The limited exposure to the river allowed a more metaphorical perception of its environment, and inverted views inward to the court and upward to the sky.

As with the river, the bridge of Baghdad is not presented directly in Al-Uzari's poetry. Rather, Al-Uzari points to the two parts of Baghdad in his poems as equally blessed, which shows that they were connected in the minds of the residents, and witnessed mutually happy times.

You were sent from the mountains of Tihamah
As a great leader who scented the two sides of Baghdad⁵³

⁵⁰ This leader is called As'ad Al-Fakhri, who was a dignified scholar in Baghdad. See Shukur (ed.), *Dewan Al-Uzari Al-Kabeer*, p. 52.

⁵¹ Shukur (ed.), *Dewan Al-Uzari Al-Kabeer*, p. 355. The Arabic script is as follows:

قمر يقمر الفؤاد بمرآه	ويشفي بريقه المعسول
نفحتنا منه الصبا فأتتنا	من عذاريه بالنسيم الليل

⁵² The city used to have a wall on the river banks, but in the late seventeenth century, the governor of Baghdad ordered the demolition of that part and opened the city to the river.

⁵³ Shukur (ed.), *Dewan Al-Uzari Al-Kabeer*, p. 200. The Arabic script is as follows:

However, in another poem, Al-Uzari explains that in addition to the happy and peaceful times the two parts of Baghdad experienced together, they also witnessed devastating conditions as well.

Oh my friend, if you are unaware of the meaning of death
Then stop your mount on the two sides of Baghdad⁵⁴

These poems represent opposing conditions of the two sides of Baghdad, which reflect the unstable situation of the city. Although the river naturally divides the area into two parts, these texts reveal the power of integration rather than separation. These poems indicate that the two parts of the city are equally important, and they suggest the dichotomy of the city as a significant trope to the urban history of Baghdad.

The various interpretations of the river and the bridge are also demonstrated in Al-Suwaidi's poetry and narratives. In one of his poems, Al-Suwaidi expresses his longing while he was in Basra away from Baghdad.

I remembered the *Khuld* and the souls that flow there
And the water that gushes forth everywhere
Can I get a sip from that water to extinguish the fires of love?
As this water comes from *Dijla* [Tigris] the pure⁵⁵

This poem includes various metaphorical meanings of the Tigris River and psychological aspects that have calming effects. These meanings include quenching the thirst with sweet water, acting as a luxury fringe to the city, and representing soulful beauty in addition to natural beauty. Al-Suwaidi mentions the *Khuld* castle, one of the luxurious castles built on the edge of the river in the Abbasid period. This castle symbolises the river as a lavish fringe of Baghdad, and a source of beauty. Although this castle had vanished completely by the time of Al-Suwaidi, it was turned into a myth that was transmitted through generations, and perpetuated in people's memories to remind them of the favourable past. Al-Suwaidi mentions souls and happy spirits that never vanish or disappear, in contrast with material beauty that is subject to continuous alteration.

These poems show outstanding features of the Tigris River's environment embedded in the literature of late eighteenth century. The metaphor of drinking the sweet water of the river has been extensively outlined in the literature and poetry of Baghdad throughout history. This suggests that the river, its environment and its water have acquired nationalistic connotations, and specific nostalgic qualities, which need to be critically examined in the historiographical studies of Baghdad.

In relation to the bridge, it appears the bridge's symbolism as a mean of connection and integration of the two parts of the city exposed it to occasional damage. Al-Suwaidi narrates

⁵⁴ Shukur (ed.), *Dewan Al-Uzari Al-Kabeer*, p. 179. The Arabic script is as follows:
وبعثت من أقصى جبال تهامة عرفا فضمخ جانبي بغداد
يا صاحبي ان كنت تجهل مال الردى فقف المطي بجاني بغداد

⁵⁵ Ra'of (ed.), *Tarekh hawadeth Baghdad wal Basrah*, p. 51. The original Arabic poem is as follows:
ذكرت الخلد والأرواح تجري به والماء يندفق اندفاقا
فهل من شربة أطفئ غرامي بها من ماء دجلة حيث راقا

an incident that happened during conflict in Baghdad, which caused the burning of parts of the bridge.

Among the traps that they [enemies] set for us is the intention to blaze the bridge at night. So they ordered a group of men to do this secretly, and they went in small boats. Their plan was to throw fire on the boats of the bridge so that the bridge would burn up and the bridge path would be disconnected⁵⁶.

This incident shows the central role of the bridge of Baghdad, which made it subject to damage and burning. Al-Suwaidi states that the people in the western side of the river became aware of the attempt to burn the bridge, so they assigned men to guard the bridge all night. However, the enemy managed to set fire to four boats from the bridge, and consequently many ropes were burnt, and the bridge was wrecked. Al-Suwaidi portrays sad feelings of watching the bridge being burnt. He narrates proudly he soon attempted to repair it with the rest of his group.

When we saw the bridge burning, our enthusiasm increased, and we quickly crossed the river and reached the other side with our boats, and we helped our people from the eastern side ... After a while that day, the bridge was fully repaired and we replaced the burning boats with four large boats from our side⁵⁷.

These texts indicate the great status of the bridge, and the strong love and dedication it inspired in the hearts of the residents, which encouraged people to protect the bridge both physically and spiritually. When the trouble ended, Al-Suwaidi expresses his pleasure in defending the city, and maintaining the bridge. This thoughtful focus on the bridge in the urban literature of Baghdad shows it as a key component and a collective icon in the urban history of the city.

The urban literature of the early nineteenth century continued to express the river as a source of beauty, prosperity, blessing and tranquillity. The early decades of the nineteenth century witnessed repairing and reopening of some secondary rivers that flow into the Tigris River. For instance, a poem by Al-Tamimi portrays the Tigris River as honourable and dignified, while celebrating the reopening of a small river called Nahr Eisa:

I don't know which one to congratulate more in my poem
 Shall I cheer up the river itself or the residents who are blessed?
 This small river was suffering from old age and ignorance
 And now, it is strutting like a proud youth
 It yearns to meet the pure and respectful river; *Dijla* [Tigris]
 As everyone longs to a gentle and thoughtful beloved⁵⁸

⁵⁶ Ra'of (ed.), *Tarekh hawadeth Baghdad wal Basrah*, p. 105. The Arabic script is as follows:

"ومن جملة ما أرادوه من المكر بنا أن أرادوا احراق الجسر ليلا بأن يوجهوا اليه قفازا خفية فيها رجال منهم ومعهم نار يلقونها في السفن، فيحترق الجسر وينقطع الطريق"

⁵⁷ Ra'of (ed.), *Tarekh hawadeth Baghdad wal Basrah*, p. 106. The Arabic script is as follows:

"فدبت الحمية فينا وعبرنا بالسفن، وساعدنا قومنا الشرقيين ... ولم تمض ساعة من النهار الا والجسر قد نصب، ووضعنا مكان سفنه الأربع أربع سفن من سفن أهل جانبنا"

⁵⁸ Al-Ameen, *A'yan Al-Shi'a*. The original Arabic poem is as follows:

فلمست أدري أهني ساكنيه به	بسانرات القوافي أم أهنيه
فعاد يخال تيه في شبيبته	من بعد شيب على كبر يقاسيه
يصبو لدجلة مذ كانت مصافية	والمرء يصبو لمعشوق يصافية

Al-Tamimi describes the Tigris River as a dignified pure river that makes other rivers strive for the moment of their reunion with it. The poem indicates the pleasure and social happiness of the river's environment, which is clearly an emotion of the poet. In a parallel poem, Al-Tamimi describes the Tigris River as a virgin, which all rivers long for, and flow quickly to meet.

This river is longing curiously for the virgin *Dijla* [Tigris]
And it folds up miles of lands to meet it rapidly⁵⁹

This poem shows the influence of the river's interlocking influence on social modes and emotions. It represents the river as a favourable component of the city, which grants honour to any other minor stream that joins it. These expressions reflect the dignity of the river in the mind of the residents.

Regarding the status of the bridge in the early decades of the nineteenth century, the urban literature of this period continued to show attachment to and appreciation for this bridge as a connecting figure between the two parts of the city. It also includes the bridge among the significant urban landmarks that institute a sense of direction, by defining other urban forms according to their proximity to the bridge. This approach shows the social influence of the bridge, due to its longevity, and the traffic it sustained over a long period. In one of his poems, Al-Tamimi gives an example of this association of urban forms with the bridge of Baghdad. In this poem, he classifies Jami' Al-Asifiyya as Jami' Al-Jisr (the bridge mosque):

The Jami' of the *jisr* [bridge] was hit by an army of old age
It was forced to be damaged by the sword of long era
Until Dawud undertook the restoration
He got the arrows of time to advance it to glory⁶⁰

This poem underlines the restoration efforts that took place in the early decades of the nineteenth century. The maintenance of some heritage mosques contributed to their stability and continuity. Al-Tamimi relates this mosque to the only bridge of Baghdad, because of its proximity to the bridge. This mosque was originally an old *masjid* and a *madrassa* (school or learning facility) built in 1017/1608, and it was renovated in 1241/1825 during the time of Dawud *pasha*. The Jami' (mosque) was called Jami' Al-Mawla Khana before the renovation, yet it was named Jami' Al-Asifiyya afterwards. The connection of the name of this mosque to the bridge indicates the unique status of the bridge, and its major role in Baghdad in that period.

The textual analysis in this section has presented a number of themes that are overlooked in conventional representations. The investigation of these themes adds extra meanings to the interpretation of both the river and the bridge. Unlike the interpretation of conventional methods, in which the understanding of the river is limited to its role as a source of floods

⁵⁹ Al-Ameen, A'yan Al-Shi'a. The original Arabic poem is as follows:

يصبو إلى الدجلة العذراء عن شغب يفري السباسب من ميل إلى ميل

⁶⁰ Ra'of (ed.), *Al-Iqd Al-Lami' bi athar Baghdad wal masajed wal jawame'*, p.328. The Arabic script is as follows:

و جامع جسر جرد الدهر جيئشه على ريعه كرها وسل حسامه
الى ان تولى الامر داود زاده الى شرف قدما اراش سهامه

and as a routine transportation facility, the multi-dimensional technique of the alternative method allows this variety of interpretation. These texts illustrated the river in correlation to other urban forms of the city. The texts interconnected the river with land, sky, and people. The result is a contented environment that offers blessing, relief, love and respect. In addition, the textual representation showed the soulful beauty of the river, which added more beauty, scented the environment, and sweetened the taste of water and life in general.

It is interesting to gain various perceptions of the river in a single period. However, all texts portrayed the loveliness and richness of the river. They represented it collectively as a source of blessings for both sides, and considered the edge of the river a connecting point between both parts of the city, either physically or visually and emotionally. In relation to the bridge, the textual representation illustrated additional qualities of the bridge, beyond being a mere means of transportation. It shows the grand prestige of the bridge in the hearts and minds of the Baghdadis. It also confirms the important role of the bridge in connecting both sides of Baghdad. This signifies the enormous growth of the western side, and the unified vision of both sides of Baghdad as one constituent. The association of the meaning of the bridge with unity, social affection and urban orientation presents it as a living form in the city that interacts with all other components.

The urban literature examined in this section suggests a different phenomenological approach to writing the history of the city, by recognising other elements that help in comprehending space such as smell, taste, relationships, and spirituality. These integral aspects of beauty, history, and spirituality, in addition to the visible beauty of the river's environment, suggest the Tigris River and the bridge as key forms in the urban history of Baghdad. These rich ideas affirm the great role of the alternative method in unveiling qualities of the river and the bridge that are unobserved in conventional histories.

5.3.4 The Multiple Meanings of Public Gardens

The analysis of gardens in this section aims to discover other meanings of the gardens in eighteenth and nineteenth century Baghdad, which are usually overlooked in conventional historiography. In the contemporary context, gardens are understood conventionally as autonomous urban features that present both social and visual phenomena. The common understanding of the garden in the Ottomans' period as 'a social experience and public hangout'⁶¹ has predominated for a long period. This understanding limits the meaning of gardens to visual and social functions, thus restricting the capability of possessing gardens to rich people. Conversely, the meaning of gardens in the urban literature of Baghdad holds a much broader capacity, since this literature presents pictures of astonishing gardens that are accessible to all⁶². Moreover, some metaphoric images (embedded in literature) express the whole city as a magnificent garden filled with flowers. The flowers symbolise many characteristics in the city, including natural landscape, social settings, and architectural items. In addition to the general meaning that links gardens to visual beauty; urban literature conveys multiple meanings of gardens, when it relates them to social pleasure, wisdom and knowledge.

⁶¹ Hamadeh, 'Public spaces and the garden culture of Istanbul in the eighteenth century', p. 281.

⁶² The representation of gardens by analysing different poems in this chapter reflects these broad meanings.

The investigation of public gardens in Baghdad is strongly related to the river. In addition to aesthetic, security and transportation services, this urban corridor is considered the main artery that grants blessing to the lands and brings happiness to the residents. In the eighteenth century, huge areas of eastern Baghdad were not fully developed. These areas usually contained farms and semi-private orchards. In addition, other urban spaces in the city encompassed various gardens within their boundaries. These spaces include waterfront mosques and schools, coffee houses and large houses. The interaction between these spaces and their enclosed gardens provided their own manner of sociability within the larger public space. On the other hand, the western side of Baghdad contained a greater number of orchards and gardens. From there, fruit and vegetables were transported to the eastern side⁶³. The relatively lower land and the great number of creeks on that side may explain the intensity of plantation in the western area. However, the urban literature of this period refers to Baghdad as a whole.

The alternative method in this thesis recognises poetry and rhetoric as important tools to understand unifications and divisions in the city structures. Although the metaphorical language is not considered factual in conventional methods, the textual representation of gardens views these texts as high representatives of truth. The methods of vertical interpretation and comparison of texts, and the key objectives of the alternative method (advancement, balance and complete vision) help to provide other understanding of gardens.

As outlined in Chapter Two, linguistic terms are crucial in history writing. For example, the word 'garden' or its Arabic substitute *hadeqa* is not indicated frequently in the urban literature of this period, since this word portrays any land with trees and plants that is surrounded by a wall. Instead, the word *rawdha* is used heavily in the literature to represent gardens. This word denotes a beautiful green land that either contains, or lies within the vicinity of a water source⁶⁴. Thus, the heavy use of the word *rawdha* suggests an elaborated meaning of gardens that goes beyond limited bounds, to outline a much more open space in the city. In addition, the word *rawdha* signifies the great role of the Tigris River and its subdivisions in the thriving of these lands. The poet Al-Uzari associates various meanings with the notion of *rawdha*. In a poem that was written to commend the leader Ahmed Al-Shawi for his efforts to solve a conflict in Baghdad, Al-Uzari links the meaning of *rawdha* to the Divine power and to life. He describes the leader as a heavenly garden of goodness that restores bodies and souls. These meanings are important to the urban historiography of Baghdad, since they define overlooked characteristics of gardens.

You protected Baghdad from every possible disaster
 What great protection Baghdad has gained!
 It was like a caravan which lost its way
 And after this wander it has got assistance
 You are a Divine *rawdha* [garden] of blessings
 That grants life to souls and bodies⁶⁵

⁶³ Ra'of (ed.), *Al-Iqd Al-Lami' bi athar Baghdad wal masajed wal jawame'*, p.140.

⁶⁴ Al-Baheth dictionary, viewed 3 June 2013, <http://www.baheth.info/all.jsp?term=روضة>

⁶⁵ Shukur (ed.), *Dewan Al-Uzari Al-Kabeer*, pp. 153-154. The Arabic script is as follows:

ظفرت بأي وقاية بغداد	يامن وقى بغداد كل كربة
فأصابه بعد الضلال رشاد	كانت كركب تاه في سريانه
تحيا بها الأرواح والأجساد	بل روضة للخير لاهوتية

This poem outlines a number of aspects that constitute a perfect garden, including divinity, productivity, and liveliness. It also shows that the amazing image of gardens existed constantly in the mind of Al-Uzari, reflecting his satisfaction and appreciation of the attributes of the city, and that image has extended to comprise different conditions of life. Another poem of Al-Uzari links the concept of hope with gardens; he associates sadness with the search for the 'garden of hope' and its extravagant perfumes.

Oh sorrow of the heart, where is the *rawdha* of hope?
And where can I find its aromatic fragrance!
The scent of dawn dropped by the horizon of sky
But our sphere missed the aroma of apples⁶⁶

Al-Uzari draws a magnificent picture of the garden of hope, which has a variety of aromas. He signifies the olfactory sense as a prevailing element in this garden. This gives the garden its identity, since the diversity of senses dictates the distinctiveness of the fragrance, and its amount. Al-Uzari connects the distinctive aroma of the garden of hope with the characters of his loved ones who have passed away. He claims that even though the strong aroma of those people has disappeared, there are still other fragrances in the air. These aromas do not have the same qualities, but they still scent the air, and give hope and confidence to heal his deep emotional wounds. In another poem, Al-Uzari relates the continuity of gardens to the presence of community.

Your absence made my eyelids pour heavily and
My tears boosted my sickness; similar to rain that normally fertilises lands
These are the empty houses, so enter them my friends
You will realise the unstable situation of gardens and their guests⁶⁷

Al-Uzari focuses on the issue of sociability in relation to gardens. He associates the lifetime of gardens with the coexistence of their visitors, as gardens may experience decline if the number of guests decreased. The poem asserts that excellent features of gardens are not stable, since they turn on changes in social circumstances. The poet illustrates these features of gardens to represent the situation of life in general. The recurrent use of gardens in the poetry of Al-Uzari to symbolise different situations in life, suggests the existence of many gardens at that time, which affected the poet's feelings and imagination. The remarkable aspect of these poems in relation to historiography is their collective consciousness of the multiple meaning of gardens, which include spiritual qualities in addition to the material features.

The poems of Al-Suwaidi also contain many depictions of gardens. For instance, in a poem that he wrote while he was away from Baghdad, Al-Suwaidi describes the city as a garden that is filled with beautiful flowers all year round.

My heart would not be burnt with the grief of distance
Except for you, oh town of Zawra'

⁶⁶ Shukur (ed.), *Dewan Al-Uzari Al-Kabeer*, pp. 122-123. The Arabic script is as follows:

ياشجا القلب أين روض المنى أم
زار أفق السماء ربحان فجر
أين مني نسيمه الفياح
غاب عن أفقنا به التفاح

⁶⁷ Shukur (ed.), *Dewan Al-Uzari Al-Kabeer*, pp. 203-205. The Arabic script is as follows:

أمطرتم جفني فأخصب لي الضنى
هذي المنازل فانزلاها تنتظرا
والخصب في الأمطار شيء عادي
كيف اختلاف الروض والرواد

Your soil is irrigated with rain and richness
 And generous clouds granted you honour
 Your lands are green in all seasons, not merely in spring
 And your flowers blossom in summer and winter⁶⁸

This poem draws a picture of the whole city of Baghdad as a stunning garden that is flourishing regularly, which reflects Al-Suwaidi's constant love and admiration for the environment of Baghdad. It also signifies the interconnecting of all urban forms to produce this unified standard of joy. The texts of both Al-Uzari and Al-Suwaidi indicate a beautiful image of both sides of Baghdad in the late eighteenth century. This image is appealing visually, spiritually, and socially. The texts do not limit the gardens to a specific locale, since they expressed multiple meanings of gardens that go beyond physical limits. The broad idea of public gardens that encompass other urban forms, such as mosques and the whole city, in addition to parks, was also maintained in this period. This broad vision is also expressed in the nineteenth century literature, yet the description of *rawdha* in this literature is more focused on beauty and less linked to sadness, indicating a remarkable change in the situation of the city. Al-Tamimi provides a great illustration of the gardens in this period.

This is a *rawdha* that was irrigated by a heavy cloud
 That granted it with a fabric full of red and yellow colours
 Every time the breeze passes by it
 It bestows us with musk arousing from a fresh land
 I imagine it like the *sundus*⁶⁹ of the angel Ridhwan⁷⁰ in paradise
 Because of the mass beauty granted to it by the water⁷¹

Al-Tamimi's poem draws a magnificent picture of the city as a garden which contains many bright coloured flowers. This beauty is always linked to the river as a main source of all types of beauty. The poet uses this picture to compare Baghdad to paradise, which suggests an ultimate beauty in all dimensions. Although Al-Tamimi illustrates the beauty of both sides of Baghdad in his writing, he more often refers to Karkh, which suggests that, compared to the eastern side, the land on that side remained open and contained large areas of greenery.

This textual representation draws a wonderful picture of Baghdad in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The scholars in this period devoted major parts of their writings to elaborate the integral beauty of the city, and its different aspects, such as greenery, fine climate and heavy rain. The texts employed the senses of smell and taste to highlight the perceptive aspect of this beauty. In addition, these texts expressed other attributes such as happiness, loveliness and divinity. The texts outlined extra meanings of gardens, which were

⁶⁸ Al-Alusi, *Baghdad fil shi'r Al-Arabi*, p. 157. The Arabic script is as follows:

لولاك يابلة الزوراء لولاك	مأحرق القلب مني شجو شجواك
سقى أديم الثرى منك الحيا وحب	سحب الكرائم في التكريم محياك
واخضر ربك من دون الربيع ولا	زالت زهورك في صيف ومشتاك

⁶⁹ The Arabic word *sundus* refers to the fine delicate beautiful fabric mentioned in the Qur'an, prepared especially for people in paradise.

⁷⁰ The name of the angel Ridhwan is associated with paradise, because Prophet Mohammed stated that this angel guards the doors to paradise.

⁷¹ Al-Ameen, *A'yan Al-Shi'a*. The original Arabic poem is as follows:

أروضة سقيت من صوب وطفاء	فألبيت نسج حمراء وصفراء
أبدت لنا كلما من النسيم بها	مسكا تضوع من أردان عفراء
أظن سندس رضوان بجنته	من بعد ماصنعت فيها يد الماء

not simply confined to a piece of land with a variety of plants. These meanings expanded into social and historical perspectives of the city. The city communicated its beauty through the interrelationship of all these elements. The idea of the whole city as a garden, which was underlined in these texts, asserts comfort and happiness despite the frequently changing situations, which affirms the important role of literature in restructuring the past.

5.3.5 The Numerous Attributes of Learning Centres

This section particularly investigates the representation of mosques and schools in texts, in order to understand the features of learning centres at that time in more depth. In general, the significant aspects of all social settings of the city are flexibility, multi-functionality, and complete integration with society. The harmony and similarity of designs of different buildings allowed simple transformation of functions whenever necessary. This flexibility encouraged more interrelationships between people, and allowed greater fulfilment of society's needs. For instance, mosques and learning schools were a great place for social activities beyond the function of worship and learning. So, the most remarkable aspect of mosques during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was their multi-tasking. The multiple activities of mosques, their specific locations, and also their design standards represented their sociability within the larger public space. These teaching mosques "were centres not of education, or even learning per se, but of the art and authority of writing"⁷². The association between writing and space is strongly recognised in these places, yet this unusual connection is problematic for conventional historiography, which explains the limited meanings that are related to the mosques in conventional writings.

Many mosques and schools were built on the edge of the river in Baghdad and in other Ottoman cities. The significance of these buildings, the safety of the waterfront location, the proximity to the bridge that offers easy accessibility from both sides of the city, and the availability of water for drinking and purification, explain this focus on waterfront locations. Throughout its history, numerous Baghdadi universities, schools and mosques, in addition to the remarkable library 'Dar Al-Hikma' have survived for a long time, adding to the city's historical significance. The reading of the urban literature of Baghdad indicates the great role of the mosques and teaching centres in Baghdadi society. Historical evidence shows Baghdadi scholars associate their recognition of the leaders in Baghdad with the leaders' appreciation of knowledge, and the admiration of knowledgeable people. For example, Al-Suwaidi describes Suleyman *Al-Kabeer* (the old) as follows: "he loves to deal with the scholars to a great extent"⁷³. Also the Baghdadi poet, Al-Tamimi praised Dawud *pasha* for supporting the scholars of Baghdad⁷⁴.

Conventional historiography focuses on the increasing interest in renovating the mosques that were damaged due to various circumstances. While a number of mosques were erected, "some existing structures were restored and extended"⁷⁵. On the other hand, the literature of late eighteenth century recognises the mosque's role of learning and teaching, more than its physical structure. The literature of the early nineteenth century continues to focus on knowledge, together with the material structure of these centres. This suggests an increase in

⁷² Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*, p. 82.

⁷³ Ra'of (ed.), *Tarekh hawadeth Baghdad wal Basrah*, p. 52.

⁷⁴ Arab Encyclopaedia 1981, viewed 3 June 2013, <<http://www.arab-ency.com>>.

⁷⁵ Ghaidan 'Damage to Iraqi's wider heritage', p. 85.

renovation projects in the nineteenth century was reflected in the writings of that period. The alternative method in this thesis combines both conventional and literary outcomes to identify more factual historical aspects related to the learning centres.

The poetry of Al-Uzari comprises numerous hints about learning and knowledge. These poems are full of logical and ethical wisdom, and they highlight many scientific facts metaphorically. His poetry collection is filled with these scientific, yet artistic and imaginative meanings.

Science is a massive and boundless sea
 The one who drinks from it is blessed and never becomes thirsty
 It's your choice to be like the space full of darkness or like the illuminated cores
 The enlightened core is not similar to the heavy dusk⁷⁶
 You did not realise that you are an element of noble qualities
 These elements cannot be transformed in any reaction
 You have a wisdom that made life continues
 As the skeleton cannot be alive without the soul⁷⁷

These poems adjoin scientific and spatial qualities with spiritual qualities. They outline a spatialisation of knowledge and express metaphorical elements within scientific facts. This interconnection is the key objective of the alternative method, which considers the intermingling of ideas and spaces, of internal and external meanings, as a factual quality of life that should be emphasised in historiographical studies to advance the understanding of the past. Al-Uzari was clever enough to write complex poetry, in which scientific facts are woven and embedded to represent different meanings symbolically. In this case, the verses represent a direct ethical meaning, and a covert scientific fact. For example, Al-Uzari wrote a poem to praise the courage, wisdom and great knowledge of the community leader Suleyman Al-Shawi:

If a person approaches Suleyman he will reach the sanctuary of success
 As there should be a reason for every cause
 He is the infinity for all kinds of knowledge
 And he is granted with honour beyond the capacity of all worlds
 If a person cannot get his desire
 You [Suleyman] will be a magnet that attracts him to fulfil his needs⁷⁸

Al-Uzari uses a twofold manner in these verses. While he refers to scientific laws symbolically to represent the traits of that leader, he explains them indirectly. Among these laws are the law of reason and the law of gravity. In a second poem, Al-Uzari depicts the

⁷⁶ Shukur (ed.), *Dewan Al-Uzari Al-Kabeer*, p. 118. The Arabic script is as follows:

والعلم لج لا يصيب وفوده
 كن كيف شئت موكباً أو مركزاً
 ظلماً فيورك رأي كل ملجج
 مالجوهر النوري كالنقل الدجي

⁷⁷ Shukur (ed.), *Dewan Al-Uzari Al-Kabeer*, pp. 361-362. The Arabic script is as follows:

لم تدر أنك للمكارم عنصر
 لك حكمة قام الوجود بلطفها
 وعناصر الأشياء لم تتحول
 والروح موجبة قيام الهيكل

⁷⁸ Shukur (ed.), *Dewan Al-Uzari Al-Kabeer*, pp. 99-103. The Arabic script is as follows:

هبي له تصلي الى حرم الغنى
 فهو النهاية بالمعارف كلها
 لا بد من سبب لكل مسبب
 شرف به دون العوالم قد جبي
 ألفاك مغناطيس ذاك المطلب
 ومتى تعذر لابن أنثى مطلب

great attributes of Suleyman Al-Shawi, such as generosity, justice and knowledge, while explaining more scientific facts about gravity and space:

Tell me about the good luck [of Suleyman] which is expected and undeniable
 Since good luck is a sea that is generated by intentions
 Without observing the planets from above
 The core of iron and steel would not have gravity⁷⁹

This poem points out the explicit meaning of ethical principles that tie everything together and control the social systems in life, exactly as gravity controls the movement of the planets. These verses reveal the influential relationship between scientific attitudes and humanistic approaches, which complement each other to present an integrated interpretation of things. The poem also reflects the great awareness that Al-Uzari has of various scientific subjects. Al-Uzari praises this scientific approach in his poetry, and he utilises more scientific facts to underline his prestige:

Every sort of magnificence is generated from my glory
 And all sorts of elements are originated from my element⁸⁰

These poems show how the poet's mind was immersed in scientific facts, which were reflected spontaneously and pleasingly. This stanza indicates the advantage of merging scientific facts with soulful ideas to represent a deeper meaning. Thus, we should avoid isolating scientific qualities from other qualities in historiographical studies. Besides his frequent use of scientific laws in his poetry to explain the meaning of things, Al-Uzari considered the process of learning a great retreat from the difficulties of life:

I believe that life is pleasant
 Yet it might become boring when your beloved ones are gone
 So, my friend, let's plunder these long hours, by seeking knowledge of a high rank
 And endeavour to forget the past tragedies⁸¹

Al-Uzari's great awareness of scientific laws indicates the variety of subjects that were taught in the mosques at that time. The comfort and relief expressed in these poems regarding learning and knowledge points out the significance of those learning venues as places of sociability and entertainment, in addition to their important teaching roles.

Similarly, the historical narratives of Al-Suwaidi indicate a great pleasure in knowledge and knowledgeable people. For instance, Al-Suwaidi recognises the knowledge of the leader Suleiman Al-Shawi, describing him as the following:

⁷⁹ Al-Sa'di, MR (ed.) 1902, *Dewan Sheikh Kadhem Al-Uzari Al-Baghdadi*, Al-Matba'a Al-Mustafawiyya, Bombay, <www.Al-mostafa.com>, p. 23. The Arabic script is as follows:

حدث عن السعد لانكر ولا عجب فالسعد بحر من الاقدار منسكب
 لولا ملاحظة الأفلاك من سعد ماكان قلب الحديد الصلب ينجذب

⁸⁰ Shukur (ed.), *Dewan Al-Uzari Al-Kabeer*, p. 311. The Arabic script is as follows:

كل المعالي من علالي تولدت وكذا العناصر أصلها من عنصري

⁸¹ Shukur (ed.), *Dewan Al-Uzari Al-Kabeer*, p. 90. The Arabic script is as follows:

وأرى الحياة لذيدة لكنها ربما تمل لفرقة الأحباب
 قم نهب الساعات في طلب العلى وتناس ذكر سواف الأحقاب

He is a scholar who is acquainted with knowledge and a cleric who has a plentiful understanding of different subjects. He has edited many books and composed useful writings⁸².

The appreciation of knowledge and scholars cannot be separated from the appreciation of the learning centres, since they constitute the settings for the learning process. Thus, it can be considered that the mosques and schools, which represented learning centres at that time were highly effective even though some of them were partially damaged due to constant floods and troubles. However, the efficacy of these centres depended on social aspects more than material aspects. Al-Suwaidi outlines this idea in his narratives:

Be aware, oh brother ... that the residents of Baghdad and Basra used to have the most affluent and prosperous life, and the most settled and comfortable period before the attack of plague⁸³.

Al-Suwaidi links prosperity and delight with the existence of scholars living prior to the plague, which hit in 1772. This happiness suggests the high respect people had for knowledge and their delight in being with the scholars. Although the actual buildings were not affected by the epidemic, Al-Suwaidi expressed deep sadness when he returned to Baghdad and found out about the great loss of scholars. This asserts the value of considering integral beauty to represent a whole satisfaction with place. Al-Suwaidi narrates when plague spread everywhere in Baghdad, he had to escape secretly with his family, as the *wali* of Baghdad, Omar *pasha* disliked people leaving the city. Al-Suwaidi made his way to Karbala, south of Baghdad, and then moved to Hilla. When the epidemic reached those cities he travelled further south to Basra.

Al-Suwaidi expresses pleasure in visiting the city of Basra. He states that he was always keen to visit Basra, because he knew it has good learning centres and many scholars. This explains how the admiration of knowledge and the accessibility of institutions of high learning dictated Al-Suwaidi's appreciation of Basra, and its beauty. This perception was common at that time, since the attractiveness of learning centres and the great sociability between scholars were among the highest objectives of cities. When Al-Suwaidi reached Basra, he was well received by the scholars and leaders there, who offered him a spacious house, and asked him to present some lectures in Masjid Al-Qibla, to share his knowledge. Al-Suwaidi expresses great pleasure to be with these scholars of Basra:

I liked their learning scheme, and I enjoyed being with them, and they enjoyed my companionship⁸⁴.

When plague reached Basra, Al-Suwaidi moved to Kuwait, and he started to teach in a mosque called Jami' Ibn Bahr. He states this *jami'* was similar to a mosque in Baghdad called Jami' Al-Qamariyya⁸⁵, which shows that the appreciation of knowledge in general, and the pleasant memory of the learning centres of Baghdad enabled Al-Suwaidi to perceive these

⁸² Ra'of (ed.), *Tarekh hawadeth Baghdad wal Basrah*, p. 83. The Arabic script is as follows:

"العالم العلامة والخبير الفهامة، صاحب التحقيقات العديدة والتصنيفات المفيدة"

⁸³ Ra'of (ed.), *Tarekh hawadeth Baghdad wal Basrah*, p. 41. The Arabic script is as follows:

"أعلم اي أخي ... فيبغداد والبصرة وما والاها كان أهلها بالنسبة الى غيرهما قبل حلول الطاعون فيهما في أرغد عيش وأهناء وأعدل وقت وأعلاه"

⁸⁴ Ra'of (ed.), *Tarekh hawadeth Baghdad wal Basrah*, p. 44. The Arabic script is as follows:

" فأعجيني اشتغالهم وتأنست بهم وتأنسوا بي"

different cities equally. When the plague eased in Basra, Al-Suwaidi decided to return, to teach in Masjid Al-Qibla. Yet, when he reached Basra, he found that all the people who used to attend his class had died. He was very upset and refused to stay, but he received an official letter from Omar *pasha* appointing him as a judge and a teacher in Basra. Al-Suwaidi writes that although the job offer was tempting, he did not want to accept it, but he had no choice. So he started his job there, but sent his family back to Baghdad⁸⁶. He notes:

After a few days the path to Baghdad was reopened ... so I sent the whole family in a ship to Baghdad and I stayed alone. In Basra, no one among the high scholars remained alive after plague, except Sayyed Yaseen ... That is why I was missing Baghdad⁸⁷.

Al-Suwaidi expresses loneliness and sadness after the loss of the grand scholars in Basra. Although he was offered a good job in a great city, he did not enjoy it, since he missed all the good people. On the other hand, his longing for Baghdad, and the scholars there, increased tremendously. Al-Suwaidi elucidates that the separation from his family and the loss of the honourable scholars in Basra were the main reasons behind his great yearning for Baghdad. So, his affection for Baghdad was significantly dictated by social relationships and scholarly connections. The understanding of these circumstances is crucial to the historiography of Baghdad in that period. The continuous longing for Baghdad and its scholars shows that Baghdad had maintained its position as a centre for learning until that time, despite numerous disasters occurring periodically throughout the city's history.

The interpretation of the texts of Al-Uzari and Al-Suwaidi presents additional meanings for the learning centres in the late eighteenth century. Besides religious activities that are emphasised in conventional historiography, this literature outlined other attributes. These include learning, social gathering, friendship, love, knowledge, comfort and happiness. In addition to these features, the urban literature of the early nineteenth century focused on the restoration processes of old mosques and madrasas, which suggests a more stable situation. The poetry of Al-Tamimi contains many examples of this. For instance, he wrote about the renovation of *Jami'* Al-Uzbek, one of the mosques in eastern Baghdad. This mosque was built in 1060/1650, and was greatly damaged in the early nineteenth century. In 1242/1826 the renovation took place. The restoration included rebuilding the *Jami'* and the attached madrasa, maintaining a corner specified for the poor and homeless, and establishing a water irrigation device, or *siqaya* that supplied fresh water⁸⁸. Al-Tamimi wrote:

This is a great house for worship; if Mina and Muhassab were close to it
You would not need to travel long distances to reach The House⁸⁹
If an arrogant and overbearing person stood in its courtyard
His heart will be submissive with the apprehension of Allah
If you visit the city of *Zawra'* then stop at its gate
You will see a mosque that prevents ignorance and negligence⁹⁰

⁸⁶ For more details about the trip of Al-Suwaidi see Ra'of, *Tarekh hawadeth Baghdad wal Basrah*.

⁸⁷ Ra'of (ed.), *Tarekh hawadeth Baghdad wal Basrah*, p. 51. The Arabic script is as follows:

"وبعد أيام قليلة انفتح طريق بغداد ... فأرسلت الجميع في سفينة، وبقيت وحدي، وليس في البصرة من طلبة العلم باقيا من حرب الطاعون سوى السيد ياسين ... فلذلك كنت أشنق الى بغداد"

⁸⁸ According to Ra'of, this building survived until 1961 when it was demolished and replaced with another mosque, which still exists. See Ra'of (ed.), *Al-Iqd Al-Lami' bi athar Baghdad wal masajed wal jawame'*, p.116.

⁸⁹ This is a metaphoric example where the poet compares the new mosque to The House which is the Ka'ba in Makkah. He refers to some places near Makkah that should be visited during Hajj like Mina and Muzdalifah.

In these verses, Al-Tamimi combines physical and spiritual qualities, and he shows an appreciation of the new settings of that mosque. Al-Tamimi establishes connections between the courtyard and the exterior view of the mosque on one hand, and worship and knowledge on the other hand. These remarks suggest that the great damage to the mosques of Baghdad at that time had an impact on the learning process, which required serious and rapid renovations. The amazing picture of the mosque drawn by the poet proves the significance of harmonising both material and spiritual qualities to provide an integral beauty of place. This proves the effectiveness of the principles of the alternative method that emphasise the integration of all dimensions of beauty.

It seems that serious renovation efforts of mosques took place in both sides of Baghdad, which indicates the remarkable growth of Karkh in early nineteenth century. Al-Tamimi points to the redevelopment of a mosque called Masjid Al-Seef in the western part of Baghdad:

Go my friend to Karkh; you will notice a *masjid* there
It has a variety of branches that are blooming with forgiveness
And write down, my friend, that this *masjid* is so honoured
Since it was constructed on a foundation made of piety⁹¹

Al-Tamimi combines both material and holy qualities in this poem to provide a complete meaning of the renovated mosque. He associates various subjects of knowledge with the fruitful branches of trees, and connects a physical part of the building, like the foundation, with piety and faithfulness. These metaphoric images enhance the integral interpretation of these spaces through logical and practical means. These texts express a continuous appreciation of the religious qualities of mosques, and the great contentment and happiness they invoke.

Among the significant traditions that usually accompany the building or renovation process of mosques in Baghdad, is the tradition of composing a poem to verify the date of the establishment, or restoration of that building. These poems are usually engraved or painted above the door of the mosque and other buildings by professional calligraphers (Figures 31, 32). This tradition was usually accompanied by another custom, engraving the establishment date of the water tap system (*siqaya*) that was often attached to the exterior mosque wall for the public. These traditions added to the historical significance of those mosques. In addition, they represented a unique social service and an iconic source of water, which signifies multiple meanings of purity, cleanliness, comfort and pleasure.

⁹⁰ Ra'of (ed.), *Al-Iqd Al-Lami' bi athar Baghdad wal masajed wal jawame'*, p.115. the Arabic script is as follows:

هو البيت لو أن المحصب أو منى	بجنبه لم تقطع إلى البيت شاسعا
إذا حل جبار قرارة صحنه	غدا قلبه من خشية الله طائعا
إذا جئت للزوراء قف عند بابها	تري جامعا من غفلة الجهل مانعا

⁹¹ Ra'of, *Al-Iqd Al-Lami' bi Athar Baghdad wal Masajed wal Jawame'*, p.517. the Arabic script is as follows:

فعج إلى الكرخ ترى مسجدا	قد أوفقت بالعفو أفنانه
وأرخن أكرم به مسجدا	على تقى أسس بنيانه

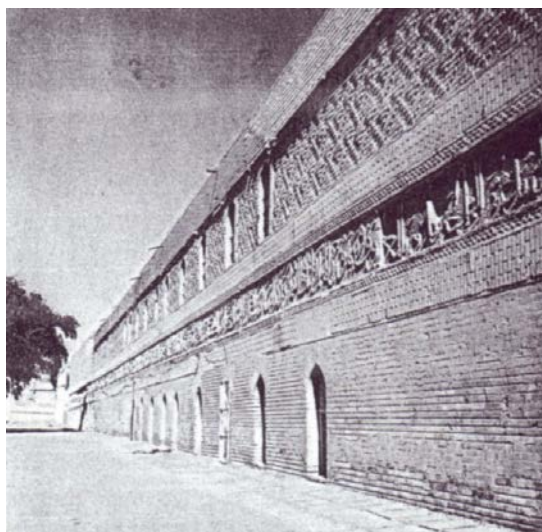


Figure 31: Arabic calligraphy on the main entrance of Jami' Mirjan [Jawad et al 1968]

Figure 32: Calligraphy on the walls of Al-Madrassa Al-Mustansiriyya [Jawad et al 1968]

The following poem verifies the establishment date of a *siqaya* that was established by Sibghatullah Al-Haydari in Jami' Al-Khulafa' in 1260/1844:

This pond quenches thirst with water
 It establishes harmony among bodies and souls
 As Sibghatullah caused the plentiful flow of this water
 For thirsty people, with good arrangements and wise restoration
 If you approach this service with a great thirst
 You will drink this cold fresh water with lots of pleasure⁹²

These lines suggest the water reticulation was a necessary service to the mosques and schools. The social aspect of establishing these *siqayas* added to the social quality of mosques. In addition to schools and *siqayas*, the mosques comprised other social services, such as *khans*, libraries, and shops established to provide the financial requirements of the mosque by the law of *waqf*⁹³. By incorporating various facilities, these mosques grew into large interrelated complexes that presented a platform for successful social commitment.

Moreover, many mosque complexes contained the tombs or burial places of dignified people, which added to their holiness and significance. In addition to honouring the dead, these urban forms acted as places for worship and social interactions, which greatly influenced the social life of Baghdad. In the nineteenth century, Baghdadis arranged seasonal or weekly visits to

⁹² Ra'of, *Al-Iqd Al-Lami' bi Athar Baghdad wal Masajed wal Jawame'*, p.387. the Arabic script is as follows:

كادت تؤلف ابدانا بأرواح	ذي بركة يرتوي منها بضحضاح
للواردین بتدبير وأصلاح	فصبغة الله اجر ماءها غدقا
اشرب هنينا مريئا بارد الراح	ان جئت ظمان قلب يامورخها

⁹³ Waqf is a nontransferable endowment in Islamic law, typically denoting a building or plot of land for religious or charitable purposes. The donated assets are held by a charitable trust.

these shrines, and they sometimes organised festivals and celebrations at these places⁹⁴. This constant respect for those who had passed away was among the unique features of Baghdad, which is noted throughout history for its great number of religious shrines. The poet Al-Rusafi articulates the meaning of this tradition:

Salute these graves, if you are truly alive
 If you are pursuing the noble virtue of honouring them
 The person who does not commemorate the martyrs' graves,
 With a lot of respect, is a dead person
 Because respecting the dead is necessary even if they are far away
 What if they were close to us?
 These graves can show us,
 How much love and respect is shown, by people who are alive, to their homelands⁹⁵

The poet states honouring the dead is a deep ethical matter, performed by people who are kind and caring for others. He states that this respect is part of Islam's religious teachings. In addition, he states people who honour the dead are those who love their homeland, and therefore, they are really alive, and do not just 'exist'. This poem asserts the deep integration of this issue in the society of Baghdad, and the strong effects on the mosques and on the urban history of the city as a whole. Furthermore, the mosques were among the venues for frequent cultural fora. These fora had developed in Baghdad from its early periods, but they increased significantly in the nineteenth century. These regular gatherings were intended to educate, entertain, and exchange knowledge between scholars. In addition to the mosques, some cultural fora were held in the houses of prominent people and in the coffee shops⁹⁶.

In brief, the analysis of different texts of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, revealed several features of the mosques and learning centres. These features show the enormous social, cultural, educational, spiritual and emotional scopes of these urban forms. The textual representations confirm the Baghdadi scholars' great appreciation of knowledge and of the learning venues. The multiple and intermingling attributes of the mosque complex increased its interface with people's lives, and contributed to its historical continuity. The reading of urban literature suggests that Baghdad sustained its position, after the Mogul invasion, as a central learning centre in the region. These interpretations are much broader than conventional readings, which limit their vision to the architectural qualities of prayer rooms, domes and minarets, in addition to highlighting some religious and social activities. The additional meanings that are displayed in this textual representation confirm the reading of texts as an effective method for reconfiguring understanding of the past.

⁹⁴ Al-Durubi, I 2001, *Al-Baghdadiyyun, akhbaruham wa majalisuhum* (Arabic), Introduction by Osama Al-Naqshabandi, Second edn, Ministry of Education, Dar Al-Shu'on Al-Thaqafiyya Al-A'mma, Baghdad, p. 354.

⁹⁵ Ra'of (ed.), *Al-Iqd Al-Lami' bi athar Baghdad wal masajed wal jawame'*, p.86. the Arabic script is as follows:

عاملا بالفضيلة الغراء	حي هذي القبور ان كنت حيا
يحيي باحترام مقابر الشهداء	انما الميت كل من لا
نوا بعادا فكيف بالقرباء	واحترام الأموات حتم وان كا
كيف حب الأوطان في الأحياء	انما هذه القبور ترينا

⁹⁶ For more information about cultural forums see Al-Durubi, *Al-Baghdadiyyun, akhbaruham wa majalisuhum*.

5.3.6 The Integrative Qualities of Markets

The urban history of Baghdad is strongly associated with market activities. Because of its geographical location and natural resources, the market place has been the predominant activity of the city since its inception. As stated in Chapter Three, the village that existed on the eastern side of the Tigris River before the establishment of the round city was called 'Suq Baghdad'. Although this village is ancient, it is mentioned only briefly in historical references on Baghdad, because it didn't have an official or a political role in the history of the city. The historian Al-Khateeb Al-Baghdadi (d. 392/1071), cites this settlement in his historical book on Baghdad:

There was a village in the site of Baghdad, and that village took the name of Baghdad. Every month, a grand *suq* [market] was held there, and the merchants go there from Persia, Ahwaz, and from cities everywhere ... in the year 13/634 Al-Muthanna Al-Shaibani ... said: I want to raid *Suq* Baghdad village⁹⁷.

When the round city of Baghdad was established, the markets were constructed inside this city, but they were removed after a short period of time⁹⁸. Al-Alusi narrates a story that explains the reason behind this expulsion. He quotes from Al-Khateeb Al-Baghdadi one day a delegate from the Byzantine Empire visited the caliph Al-Mansour and expressed his astonishment about the round city. He declared that the round city would be perfect except for three shortcomings. First, the city was far away from the river. Second, there was not much greenery, and third, the markets were inside the city, meaning that enemies could penetrate at any time⁹⁹. Regardless of the reliability of this story and the reason of the removal of markets to the outside of the city, this action hastened the decline of the round city, and, at the same time, it encouraged growth outside that city.

Although these markets grew on both sides of the river, they expanded more significantly on the eastern side of the river, which suggests that the ancient village (Suq Baghdad) survived until the present as the catalyst for market activity. The long historical recognition of the eastern part as a *suq*, the liveliness and energy that are associated with these markets, and the appropriate location and the easy approach for merchants from various areas in Asia, promoted the continuous flourishing of the markets on this side, and dictated their survival. These markets grew into a vital commercial complex that encompassed numerous specialised markets. This specialisation is considered among the important attributes of the markets of Baghdad, and all other adjacent cities. Historians state that in the eighteenth century, the tendency for similar craftsmen to work side by side in the same street became stronger, as it helped to defend their monopoly rights and to regulate price and quality. This practice also "tended to strengthen their other social ties"¹⁰⁰. These markets comprised shops that followed each other through a labyrinth of arcades, interspersed with mosques and tombs. The name of each market was normally linked to the kind of goods that were manufactured or sold there. For instance, Abadah points out to a specialised market that was built in 1772:

⁹⁷ Ra'of (ed.), *Al-Iqd Al-Lami' bi athar Baghdad wal masajed wal jawame'*, p.20. the Arabic script is as follows: "كان في موضع بغداد قرية تسمى باسمها، وكانت تقام فيها سوق عظيمة في كل شهر فيأتيها التجار من فارس والأهواز وسائر البلاد ... ففي سنة 13 من الهجرة ... المثنى الشيباني ... قال له: أريد أن أغير على سوق بغداد"

⁹⁸ For more details, see Chapter Three.

⁹⁹ Ra'of (ed.), *Akhbaar Baghdad wa ma jawaraha min Al-Bilad*, p. 58. Also Lassner pointed to the same story in his book on Baghdad; Lassner, *The topography of Baghdad in the early Middle Ages*, p. 61.

¹⁰⁰ Inalcik, *An economic and social history of the Ottoman Empire*, p. 696.

It is at a corner situated in Suq Al-Jaded neighbourhood, and this *suq* is also called Suq Al-Laban. It was called Suq Al-Jaded [new] because it was constructed recently, and was called Suq Al-Laban [yoghurt] because yoghurt is the main food that is sold there¹⁰¹.

Although Abadah wrote his book in the early twentieth century, he still considered it a new market, which shows the perfect condition of the market after more than a century. The specialised markets of Baghdad were built on the same locations of the markets since the Abbasid period, when Suq Baghdad developed into a big market complex. Examples of these markets are Suq Al-Bazzazen (draper's market), Suq A-Warraquen (books sellers' market) and Suq Al-Khayyaten (tailors' market). Among the remarkable aspects of these markets was that, in some, goods were manufactured and sold in the same location, which increased efficiency and decreased labour and complexities of transportation¹⁰². Thus, it can be assumed the old markets that were constructed by the tenth century continued to survive in Baghdad regardless of intermittent tragedies.

In addition to trade and social activities, the markets occasionally took on political roles, as they were usually decorated for special occasions¹⁰³. Other prominent facilities that are usually associated with the markets and mosques were the *khans* or guesthouses, which were usually built of two storeys. While the upper storey was occupied with visitors, the lower storey was designed to hold workshops, storerooms, and other retail shops¹⁰⁴. These linear markets were effective venues for gathering and socialising, since they contained many mosques, in addition to the open squares, or *maydans*, and the coffee shops, which made them a significant social component in the city. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the number of the coffee shops increased, and they became an integral part of public spaces, and "a commonplace of new *waqf* establishments"¹⁰⁵. Many of these shops were attached to mosques, to assist in the financial costs of the mosque. Apart from entertainment and relaxation, these places were increasingly developing into social, cultural, and political fora, as they were visited frequently by many scholars and poets, in addition to merchants and other groups.

Some historical references suggest that the first coffee shop, or what is called *maqha* in Arabic, was established in Khan Jighal by 995/1586¹⁰⁶. Others suggest that the coffee shops

¹⁰¹ Ra'of (ed.), *Al-Iqd Al-Lami' bi athar Baghdad wal masajed wal jawame'*, p.490. The Arabic script is as follows:

"زاوية واقعة في محلة سوق الجديد، ويسمى سوق اللبن، وسمي سوق الجديد لأنشائه حديثاً، وسوق اللبن لكون اللبن يباع فيه"

¹⁰² For example, Abadah identifies the shoe market that lies next to Jami' Al-Wazir: "The yamanchiyya are the people who make the Yamani, and they have a special market in Baghdad". The Yamani is a red shoe (الخف) الأحمر that was used since early Islamic days. See Ra'of (ed.), *Al-Iqd Al-Lami' bi athar Baghdad wal masajed wal jawame'*, p.251. The Arabic script is as follows:

"واليمنجية هم عاملوا الأحذية، اليمنى، لهم سوق مخصوص في بغداد"

¹⁰³ These decorations take place on the happy occasions. For example, the birth of a new baby for the *pasha*, or when they gain a victory in a battle. Khulusi (ed.), *Tarekh Baghdad*, p. 37.

¹⁰⁴ An example of these *khans* that have retail shops is *khan Jighal*, which was originally built in 999/1590, and was reported among the properties of Suleyman *pasha* in 1206/1792 as having many shops that were occupied by the jewellers. See Ra'of (ed.), *Tarekh hawadeth Baghdad wal Basrah*, p. 120.

¹⁰⁵ Hamadeh, 'Public spaces and the garden culture of Istanbul in the eighteenth century', p. 299.

¹⁰⁶ See Al-Rumethi, J, 'Maqahi Baghdad', viewed 3 June 2013, <<https://sites.google.com/site/elkarbalaee/baghdadcoffieshops>>. Also Ra'of suggested that the first coffee shop was built in Baghdad in Khan Jighal but he suggests the date 899/1590 instead.

had existed in Baghdad since late Abbasids time. They proposed that the *maqha* of Suq Al-Khaffafen has specific architectural features similar to the madrasa Al-Mustansiriyya which was built in the thirteenth century¹⁰⁷, and therefore it can be assumed that it was built in the same period. Al-Rumethi proposes that this *maqha* is three hundred years old, which means that it was built in approximately the early eighteenth century¹⁰⁸. It appears that this building could have been established in the thirteenth century, yet there is no strong evidence that it took the function of *maqha* then. This function might have taken place in this building by the sixteenth century, and it might have been renovated or rebuilt in the eighteenth century.

The coffee shops of Baghdad usually serve lemon juice, dried flower tea, dried lemon tea, tea and coffee¹⁰⁹. Perhaps the name of these shops was associated with coffee because of its connection to the Arabic culture, and its increasing social influence in the city. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the number of coffee shops increased enormously, along with their social and educational value, as they became a common setting for cultural fora. The increase in writing and the development of printing presses boosted the educational role of coffee shops. With the expansion of Baghdad and the growth in population, these public places became unique social settings¹¹⁰. Because of these social measures, the coffee shops are specifically included with the markets in this section.

In relation to the urban literature of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the markets are illustrated indirectly and infrequently. In contrast to the huge amount of writings in relation to the beauty of Baghdad, the river environment, and the love of knowledge and learning centres, the markets did not attain a similar focus in literature. This suggests less love and social attachment to markets, compared with other urban forms. It also indicates that although market activity has been fundamental to the place, Baghdad's prevailing identity has been as a learning centre and as a beautiful place, since these both connected more to religious teachings that greatly encouraged learning. However, the texts of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries contain some descriptions of markets. Also the appreciation of the whole city of Baghdad in these writings includes an admiration for the markets as well. Moreover, the metaphors of trading activities and values are embedded in these texts. For example, Al-Uzari uses the symbolic meaning of trade to articulate high ethics and nobility:

I congratulate you Karbala for the beautiful costume you obtained
 Yet this dress is prepared with *yumn* [blessings] and wasn't manufactured in Yemen
 Who can tell the market of that day about this tragedy?
 When the sacred jewels were sold cheaply¹¹¹

Al-Uzari compares the new costume honouring the martyrs in Karbala¹¹² with a high quality outfit that is usually imported from Yemen. He utilises the powerful similarity of the Arabic

¹⁰⁷ Al-Janabi, B 2009, 'Tarekh Baghdad yastarkhi fi dhilal maqha Al-Khaffafeen', viewed 3 June 2013, <www.aljanabi.com>.

¹⁰⁸ Al-Rumethi, 'Maqahi Baghdad'.

¹⁰⁹ Al-Durubi, *Al-Baghdadiyyun, akhbaruham wa majalisuhum*, p. 346.

¹¹⁰ By the mid twentieth century, the educational role of coffee shops weakened, but they maintained their entertainment function. At present, they are diminishing in Baghdad as they have been gradually replaced with other cultural and social clubs. However, a number of historical *maqhas* still exist actively in Baghdad.

¹¹¹ Shukur (ed.), *Dewan Al-Uzari Al-Kabeer*, p. 434. The Arabic script is as follows:

من صنعة اليمن لا من صنعة اليمن	يهنيك ياكربلا وشي ظفرت به
جواهر القدس قد بيعت بلا ثمن	من مبلغ سوق ذاك اليوم ان به

words *yumn* and Yemen, to explain the prestige of Karbala and compare it to the reputation of the Yemeni goods. This indicates the active and easy trade between Baghdad and Yemen in the late eighteenth century and the richness of the markets of Baghdad at that time. In addition to Yemen, Al-Uzari refers to the goods of Egypt and Persia, which suggests vital economic exchange, and shows that Baghdad's markets sustained their central position in the region in that period:

I remember those memorable places that were adorned with costumes from Egypt
And they were also decorated with paintings and portraits from Persia
Though they know my real value, they sold me cheaply
As love includes a degree of critique that might underestimate lovers¹¹³

The poem is dedicated to praise the scholar As'ad Fakhri Zadeh (d. 1203/1788). Al-Uzari points out the lovely neighbourhoods in eastern Baghdad, which brought him joy during his youth. He depicts them as pleasant places that are adorned with goods from Egypt and Persia. The poem refers to the effects of migration from the surrounding area to Baghdad before the mid-eighteenth century, which resulted in the productive transmission of different crafts, illustrative arts and architecture to Baghdad¹¹⁴. The process of memorialising things usually strengthens associations with the past, and shows a considerable alteration in their status. Thus, remembering familiar spaces in the city in this poem indicates their apparent change, and suggests that the commercial activity in Baghdad was more prosperous by the mid-eighteenth century, during the poet's youth. Al-Suwaidi relates the decrease in commercial activities in Baghdad in the late eighteenth century to political problems. In his historical narratives, Al-Suwaidi explains a clash that took place in 1777 on the position of the governor of Baghdad. He pictures the market at this time as a locale for tension and anxiety instead of relief and prosperity:

At some of those previous nights, one of the guards of the markets observed some shopkeepers opening their shops at night. Those shopkeepers took away their money from their shops ... In the morning, the *maydan* [public square] was full as usual, and the shopkeepers were busy with their business, as if no one has recognised what happened the night before¹¹⁵.

Al-Suwaidi portrays the market's situation that night as full of tension, as the soldiers were assembling and preparing for a probable fight. The political situation affected the market and the retail activity to an extent, and made the merchants anxious about their belongings, though, they strived to act normally in the next morning, and the markets maintained their efficiency. These statements portray the markets of Baghdad in the late eighteenth century as lively and active, yet they were exposed to political tensions, which made their situation unstable occasionally. It appears that this tension increased a year later, to such a degree that many merchants chose to depart from Baghdad. While he narrates a story about a man who

¹¹² This tragedy took place in 61/680 when the grandson of the Prophet Mohammed was killed along with his family and companions.

¹¹³ Shukur (ed.), *Dewan Al-Uzari Al-Kabeer*, p. 323. The Arabic script is as follows:

معاهد حلتهن مصر بوشيهها وأهدت اليهن التصاوير فارس
شروني على علم بأبخس قيمة وللحب نقد للمحبين باخس

¹¹⁴ For more about this migration see Chapter Three of this thesis.

¹¹⁵ Ra'of (ed.), *Tarekh hawadeth Baghdad wal Basrah*, pp. 134-135. The Arabic script is as follows:

"ففي بعض الليالي رأى حارس من حراس الأسواق بعض السوقه جاؤوا ليلا، وأخرجوا مالهم من دكاكينهم ... فلما أصبح الصباح صار الميدان كالعادة، كل ذي حرفة مشغول بحرفته، وكانهم لم يشعروا بما وقع ليلا"

was part of a political conflict in Baghdad, Al-Suwaidi relates the decrease in trade in the late eighteenth century to the departure of many merchants from Baghdad due to difficult political circumstances:

This man established good relations with Omar *pasha* and helped him to oppress people and encouraged him to take money by force, which made the merchants quit Baghdad and travel far away ... This man also established good relations with Abdullah *pasha*, and when he was appointed as a treasurer, all merchants of Baghdad escaped with their families and their possessions, and the merchants from the borders of Baghdad refrained from entering the city¹¹⁶.

This narrative designates that the markets of Baghdad were flourishing before 1778. The merchants had a leading position in the city, as their escape had remarkable effects on the society. The narrative also shows the consequences of the incorrect policies of the governors of Baghdad, on the situation of the city. Regarding the coffee shops, the urban literature of the late eighteenth century includes remarkable indications in relation to coffee and the coffee shops. These coffee shops were major landmarks in the city, and they were usually situated in strategic locations (Figure 33).



Figure 33: Outdoor coffee shop [Stark 1947]

Al-Uzari advocates coffee as a drink in these lines:

The black coffee is the best, so enjoy the youth that is embedded in it
And avoid that aged item [with white hair] since it's dying soon from old age
The white part of the eye shows darkness
And the black part of the eye proves brightness¹¹⁷

¹¹⁶ Ra'of (ed.), *Tarekh hawadeth Baghdad wal Basrah*, p. 66. The Arabic script is as follows:

"فاتصل بعمر باشا ودله على مظالم ... وجراه على أخذ أموال الناس حتى هربت من جوره أكثر التجار في الأمصار الشاسعة والأقطار الواسعة ... ولما اتصل بعبد الله باشا وصار عنده خزن دارا هرب جميع تجار بغداد بعيالهم وأموالهم، وامتنعت تجار الأطراف من الدخول الى بغداد"

¹¹⁷ Shukur (ed.), *Dewan Al-Uzari Al-Kabeer*, p. 470. The Arabic script is as follows:

هي القهوة السوداء فانهم بشرخها	ودع عنك شمطاء طوتها دهورها
فان بياض العين للعين ظلمة	وان سواد العين للعين نورها

In this poem, Al-Uzari encourages people to drink coffee over wine, and describes coffee as a youth compared to that elderly drink¹¹⁸. This poem confirms the relatively new function of drinking coffee in public places and verifies the growing interest of people in attending the coffee shops. It is worthy of note that the Arabic word *qahwa* that corresponds to coffee means liquor in Arabic, which implies that the coffee took the name *qahwa* because it is infused and has relatively similar effects on appetite¹¹⁹. Al-Uzari uses scientific facts to clarify the features of contrasting colours. The use of colours to interpret ideas in poetry is a powerful method of interpretation. On the one hand, colours appear to be easy to understand, and on the other hand they have eloquent, deep meanings embedded in them. In this poem, Al-Uzari places the interpretation of colours against their common visual meanings as a great philosophy in life¹²⁰. This creates an opening for more investigation of this notion in further studies.

Al-Suwaidi brings up more insights into the conditions of the coffee shops in late eighteenth century. He mentions a special coffee market while narrating the burning of the bridge of Baghdad:

They plundered the *khans* of grocery, which are located in the *suq* of the coffee grinders, and they took everything including *tutun* [tobacco for the hookah], gall oak, and soap¹²¹.

Al-Suwaidi refers to a specific market, where coffee beans were crushed and prepared for sale in the same place. Although other goods were stored and sold in the same market, the name of the market was associated with coffee because it was a dominant product in that market. This shows the scale of coffee consumption had risen to the degree that it started to carry a specialised market name. In addition, Al-Suwaidi mentions coffee as part of the hospitality of Baghdadis:

We arranged the supply of bonfires, coffee, and tobacco each night, and we provided them with food, days and nights from our side for four days¹²².

Al-Suwaidi showed the generosity of his group during a problem between people from the two sides of Baghdad. He included coffee with food and other supplies, which they prepared for their friends from eastern Baghdad. This statement suggests coffee took on a uniquely luxurious character in late eighteenth century. Apart from luxury and entertainment, Al-Suwaidi refers to coffee shops mostly as meeting places, and as notable components of the city.

They came to the *maydan* and they noticed that the coffee shop that lies on the gate of Qal'a [castle] was overcrowding with men and weapons, and they saw the

¹¹⁸ Although drinking wine is forbidden in Islam and no religious scholar would have it, it was a trend in poetry to mention it occasionally because of its long history before Islam.

¹¹⁹ Al-Baheth dictionary, viewed 3 June 2013, <<http://www.baheth.info/all.jsp?term=قهوة>>

¹²⁰ Another example of the interpretation of colours was explained in Chapter Four, in the poetry of Al-Hilli.

¹²¹ Ra'of (ed.), *Tarekh hawadeth Baghdad wal Basrah*, p. 116. The Arabic script is as follows:

"ونهبوا خانات البقاعيل التي في دقاقين القهوة، وأخذوا جميع ما فيها من توتون وعص وصابون"

¹²² Ra'of (ed.), *Tarekh hawadeth Baghdad wal Basrah*, p. 118. The Arabic script is as follows:

"فرتبنا لهم المشاعل والقهوة والتوتون كل ليلة، وجعلنا طعامهم صباحا ومساء على جانبنا أربعة أيام"

same near the gate of Al-Imam A'dham, and then they went to the neighbourhood of Muhammad Al-Fadhl and they found same thing¹²³.

Al-Suwaidi designates a number of coffee shops in this narration, which shows the success of these spaces as great social settings. During special events, these places acted as cultural or political hubs in the city. However, the increasing number of these activities on the river's banks, and the pleasure reflected frequently in texts, attest that the social and entertainment function of coffee shops overshadowed their political roles.

The reading of the texts of Al-Uzari and Al-Suwaidi in relation to the markets of Baghdad highlighted the unstable conditions of the markets of Baghdad in late eighteenth century, since they were affected greatly by political conditions. This representation revealed other social aspects of the markets not covered by conventional resources, which focus greatly on physical descriptions of these markets. Although the coffee shops received notable interest from people and demonstrated unique social qualities throughout the history of Baghdad, they also had influence during conflicts, since sometimes they became a hub for soldiers' assembly rather than education and entertainment spaces. These occasional interferences influenced the conditions of these markets, yet they could not affect the continuity of retail and social activities, since these activities were perpetuated in place, and could not be affected by recurrent problems.

In the early nineteenth century, the conditions of the markets seemed to have been improved. Historical narrations indicate more specialised markets were newly created or rebuilt. The markets were linked to other social settings, such as mosques, *madrasas* and *khans* in the urban literature of this period. This implies the dominant characteristics of the mosques, which granted the markets more recognition and honour if they were associated with them. In addition to mosques, the markets were associated with *khans* in literature, which designates interconnection and dependence as the main features of the markets in that period. Al-Tamimi wrote a poem describing the market and khan of Al-Seef, where various grains were sold or stored.

I swear in the name of Allah
He who adorned the sky with special stars
The person who constructed this building [khan of Al-Seef]
Has great determination that could reach the orbits
I advise the person who is eager to gain profit
From all kinds of people, the talking and the mute
You have to be fair when you measure the goods
And never attempt at decreasing weights¹²⁴

¹²³ Ra'of (ed.), *Tarekh hawadeth Baghdad wal Basrah*, p. 135. The Arabic script is as follows:

"فجاء الى الميدان فأبصر القهوة خانة التي عند باب القلعة غاصة بالرجال والسلاح، ثم أبصر عند باب الأمام الأعظم مثل ذلك، وذهب الى ناحية محمد الفضل فوجدا ثمة مثل ذلك"

¹²⁴ Ra'of (ed.), *Al-Iqd Al-Lami' bi athar Baghdad wal masajed wal jawame'*, p. 518. The Arabic script is as follows:

أقسم بالله الذي زين	سماؤه بالخنس الكنس
ان الذي شيد هذا البنا	ذو همة بالفلك الأطلس
فقل لمن يجهد في مكسب	من ناطق فيه ومن أخرس
أوف اذا كنت ومن بعد ذا	أرخ وبالميزان لا تبخس

Al-Tamimi expresses admiration for the new market complex that was established during the rule of Dawud *pasha*, but at the same time he conveys his concerns about dishonest retail procedures. These remarks show the role of integral beauty to express a complete beauty of place. The newly developed markets could not be fully effective and permanent unless high ethics were combined with beautiful physical qualities, to imply that fairness and honesty should be experienced in trade. Although coffee shops are not strongly indicated in the poetry of Al-Tamimi (as they are always considered parts of the mosque complexes) there are some indirect indications embedded in the texts. For instance, Al-Tamimi wrote a poem about opening a road and a gate beside the bridge of Baghdad next to Jami' Al-Asifiyya:

The imprints of Dawud endowed Baghdad
 With a beautiful dress that brings pleasure to the eye
 The Rusafa was complaining of narrow roads before
 And everyone hated this tightness
 It was provided with a wide road that decreased congestion, and a gate on the bridge
 Surely he who gave these presents to Baghdad is victorious¹²⁵

The gate described in this poem was called Bab Al-Jisr (the gate of the bridge). There was a coffee shop attached to this gate, located at the end of the bridge. This coffee shop was mentioned in many historical books and was illustrated in traveller's drawings of Baghdad¹²⁶. Because this coffee shop is related to the mosque complex, and to the nearby bridge, it wasn't highlighted separately in literature.

In the nineteenth century, the number of coffee shops continued to increase, along with the mosques which were either renovated or rebuilt. Historians, such as Abadah, cited many coffee shops in their books, in addition to other shops that constituted extensions to the renovated mosques. Examples of these coffee shops are Qahwat Hammam Al-Malih, Qahwat Al-Maydan, and Qahwat Na'ela Khatun¹²⁷. In addition to the numerous shops that were attached to mosques, a number of coffee shops were also attached to *khans* and linear markets, but remained as parts of the big complex.

The representation of markets and coffee shops in early nineteenth century Baghdad shows an increasing interest in rebuilding and renovating these spaces along with other public settings. However, it seems that there was no clear scheme for building and renovating schemes, since shops were sometimes built to support the mosques financially, or sometimes totally built by individuals. The continuation and growth of specialised markets in this period indicate the perpetuation of these activities in the city. The interlocking connections between the mosques, markets and *khans* resulted in a vibrant complex that provided a great social experience. The permanence and speciality of the markets, the social aspects of markets and coffee shops, and the integrated beauty that combines physical and ethical beauties are not emphasised in the common historiography of Baghdad. This confirms the role of literature in revealing those spatial themes.

¹²⁵ Ra'of (ed.), *Al-Iqd Al-Lami' bi athar Baghdad wal masajed wal jawame'*, p. 329. The Arabic script is as follows:

بغداد حسنا يروق العين واضح	آثار داود آثار بها ليست
ويكره الضيق غاديه ورائحه	تشكو الرصافة قدم ضيق مسلكتها
وباب جسر حبي بالنصر مانحه	فأمنحت بطريق لازحام له

¹²⁶ For more about these observations see Chapter Six of this thesis.

¹²⁷ For more examples see Ra'of (ed.), *Al-Iqd Al-Lami' bi athar Baghdad wal masajed wal jawame'*.

5.3.7 The Social and Leisure Significance of Houses

The conventional understanding of the houses of Baghdad, and other cities in the region in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, is limited to domestic meanings. In addition, there are hardly any clues in conventional sources about the conditions of houses in the late eighteenth century, compared with plentiful studies on the houses of the late nineteenth century. This is because the study of architectural styles dominated their investigative methods, and the survival of some of these houses into the twentieth century made it possible to examine them thoroughly. Conversely, the houses of the eighteenth century did not attain similar interest in historiography, since they were greatly altered, and were less documented by foreign travellers due to the barriers of privacy. In addition, the loss of some historical documents may explain the limited historical evidence from the eighteenth century. Conventional methods study the architectural features of these houses of Baghdad as part of examining the 'traditional' that belongs to the past, and thus they do not question their actual roles in the society. The analysis of urban literature intends to explore other features of these houses that are either unexplained or overlooked in conventional sources, in order to identify further interpretations of these houses.

The writings of Al-Uzari and Al-Suwaidi express additional features of the houses in late eighteenth century Baghdad. These features embrace spiritual and social beauties, in addition to a visual beauty that is interconnected with natural and environmental features. The houses are always presented in relation to the people who live in them. This ultimate connection opens up a wide range of meanings. For example, Al-Uzari associates the meaning of a house with happiness and safety, in addition to visual beauty.

I remember the house in Dhil-Arakah
That is filled with pleasure
It has fountains that are overflowing with water
And the great tree makes shadows that dance beneath it
Their guest is protected and their neighbour is safe
The house offers relief even for the enemies¹²⁸

Al-Uzari draws a stunning picture of a house that illustrates all kinds of beauty, where natural elements like water and trees perfected the scene along with other attributes like kindness, contentment and protection. Although the poem indicates several facets of the beauty of the house, the water feature was the first factor in this appreciation, followed by the shadows of trees. This method is inspired by the Qur'an, which includes numerous verses that describe the blissful atmosphere in paradise, associating this happiness initially with water. The link to water is associated with its meanings of purity, satisfaction and cleanliness. In addition, water represents life in every dimension, since every living feature is made of water¹²⁹.

¹²⁸ Shukur (ed.), *Dewan Al-Uzari Al-Kabeer*, pp. 53-56. The Arabic script is as follows:

ولقد ذكرت بذي الأراكة منزلا	نشرت جناحيها به السراء
ومذائب الغدران يطفح ماؤها	والدوح ترقص تحته الأفياء
يحمي نزيلهم ويأمن جارهم	ولو استجارت فيهم الأعداء

¹²⁹ This is one of the verses in Qur'an: "And We started every living creature from water" chapter 21, verse 30. The Arabic script is: وجعلنا من الماء كل شيء حي

In addition to water, Al-Uzari mentions the shadows of trees as an additional element that provides comfort and protection, and this quality is also emphasised in the Qur'an, which indicates the remarkable influence of the Qur'an on Al-Uzari's poetry. The safety and protection factor is not confined to the residents of that house, as the house offers protection to its neighbours and even to the enemies if they asked for it. This measure of protection suggests that attached and grouped houses, occupied by people who share similar interests constituted a successful housing experience in Baghdad at that time. However, Al-Uzari mentions all these attributes in a memorialising manner, which suggests some diminution in these qualities by the late eighteenth century. In another poem that was written to grieve for Abdullah Al-Fakhri, Al-Uzari also remembers other qualities of houses:

I honour these houses that are emptied
 They have been places of good luck and generosity
 Their *rawdha* [garden] and shade are similar to paradise
 Yet the only difference is they are not houses of eternity¹³⁰

Al-Uzari illustrates Al-Fakhri's house as a reflection of the people who occupied it. This poem places greater emphasis on the social characteristics of houses. The more benefit they offer to the public, the more the houses are recognised and appreciated. The amount of goodness and generosity presented in these houses, in addition to the water gardens or *rawdha*, and their shade makes them parallel to paradise. This poem indicates the social and spiritual qualities of houses, and it shows the great influence of the Qur'an on the poetry of this period.

In another poem, Al-Uzari shows passion for the houses of loved ones, since his perspective of these houses is always connected to people. He uses 'a gentle breeze' in a metaphoric meaning to represent the scent of these places. Although natural air currents are normally associated with the river and other natural elements, Al-Uzari's poem indicates the smell of place as a mix of natural breeze and lively aroma.

Oh the house of my permanent love
 I pray that you have everlasting rain and blessings
 Gentle breezes are strolling unhurriedly inside you
 Like a prisoner who walks slowly with heavy chains¹³¹

This poem indicates the courtyard of houses indirectly, by mentioning the heavy rain and breeze that strolls happily inside. Because the housing style of Baghdad in the late eighteenth century constituted attached buildings, the only open space was the courtyard. Al-Uzari's poetry contains numerous pictures that outline his strong attachment to the courtyard space, and the inspirational influence of the link to the sky on his poems and on life inside the house. In addition to the blessing of place and the specific aroma of his beloved ones, Al-Uzari cites his contemplation at night through the courtyard space:

¹³⁰ Shukur (ed.), *Dewan Al-Uzari Al-Kabeer*, p. 191. The Arabic script is as follows:

مطالع سعد أو مطارح جود
 سوى أنها ليست بدار خلود

لعمري خلت تلك الديار ولم تزل
 كأن من الفردوس روضة ظلها

¹³¹ Shukur (ed.), *Dewan Al-Uzari Al-Kabeer*, p. 238. The Arabic script is as follows:

عقرت بعهدك كوم كل عهاد
 مشي الأسير بأثقل الأصفاد

يادار من عقرت عليه مودتي
 وتمشت النسمات فيك عليلة

One night I was awake along with the night star
 Until both of us turned sore eyed
 Oh the breeze of the valley where did my friends reside?
 For their sake, tell me truthful news about them¹³²

This poem illustrates the courtyard as a means of connection to the sky to seek relief from sadness and grief. The poet interacts with the stars and the wind, and he relates his dialogue with them to express his feelings. The interaction with the breeze establishes a horizontal connection, while connecting to the stars indicates a vertical connection, yet both bonds prove the benefit of the courtyard space that provided that direct link. The poem shows the meanings of the stars contributed to the easing of that sadness. These meanings include hope, brightness and firmness. In another poem, Al-Uzari relates to the planets and the moon during a period of loss and sadness:

Who can help me to help those moving planets to come back?
 They are praiseworthy in their initial appearance and their return
 The moon at night always reminds me of my beloved moons
 As things are always associated with their matches¹³³

Al-Uzari likens his friends, who had passed away, to the moving planets to explain their changing condition. However, their beauty and brightness would enlighten the darkness whether they stayed or moved away. This indicates strong social bonds between the scholars, and the great appreciation of nobility and high ethics in the society. The extensive use of elements of the sky at night in these texts indicates that the poet spent long times reflecting at night, interacting with the sky, and praying to God. These texts show the comforting effects of raising the eyes to the sky in the case of sadness and grief, which reveals a continuous religious awareness in the mind of the poet. This signifies an additional connecting role of the open courtyard in houses, apart from lighting and ventilation. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, historians suggest another cause for the intensive orientation to the sky: to establish connections between houses and the river's space through the open courtyard. Due to lack of accessibility through the city lanes to the river's shores, these links with the sky space compensate for the river's space¹³⁴. These remarks suggest multiple roles for the courtyards, both physical and spiritual.

Likewise, Al-Suwaidi expresses parallel views of the houses and neighbourhoods of Baghdad. In his historical narratives, he describes these houses as fine big houses, and he considers his home as a place of sanctuary and peace:

When I moved back from Basra to Baghdad, I wanted to escape from the
 Persians, and I was keen to meet my friends and my loved ones. I saw that plague
 exterminated my nearest and dearest and all good people and left bad people alive

¹³² Shukur (ed.), *Dewan Al-Uzari Al-Kabeer*, pp. 172-173. The Arabic script is as follows:

في ليلة ساهرت كوكب أفقها
 حتى استحال بها كلانا أرمدا
 يانسمة الوادي الذي نزلوا بهم
 بحياتهم هات الحديث المسندا

¹³³ Shukur (ed.), *Dewan Al-Uzari Al-Kabeer*, pp. 203-206. The Arabic script is as follows:

من لي يعود كواكب سياراة
 محمودة في مبدأ ومعاد
 قمر يذكرني به قمر الدجى
 قد تذكر الأشياء بالأنداد

¹³⁴ Makkiyya (ed.), *Baghdad*, p. 286.

... So, I decided to stay away from this corruption, and I chose to hang about alone at home, and occupied myself with my books¹³⁵.

Al-Suwaidi illustrated the situation of Baghdad after the plague hit in 1772. He had to leave Baghdad, so he went to Basra to escape the epidemic. As mentioned previously, he suffered greatly during that time because he missed his beloved city and his friends in Baghdad. Yet when he returned to Baghdad in 1775 he discovered the death of many Baghdadi scholars. This loss provoked deep sadness and changed his views of the city dramatically. Al-Suwaidi blamed disease for the great loss of good people and the increase in bad people, showing the symbolic meaning of the epidemic. This meaning represents the supremacy of social beauty over other attributes, as the loss of good people changed the beauty of the city in the poet's imagination. Consequently, Al-Suwaidi chose to stay at home occupying himself with reading and writing books. He designated his home as his sanctuary during that hardship. His association of home with reading and writing reveals another feature of these houses that usually contained special spaces for books.

During a clash in 1777 on the position of the governor of Baghdad, Al-Suwaidi decided not to support either group of opponents to adhere to Islamic laws. He states:

I believe Islamic law and logic imply that we do not support anyone, as Baghdad's rule would not become possible for everyone but for a great ruler¹³⁶

So he stayed at home for a while, but later decided to participate in the conflict. The house in this case was a peaceful place that offered comfort and relief for him. He wrote this poem:

I haven't experienced the pleasure of safety
Until I stayed at home and became a close friend to my books¹³⁷

The representation of the literature and poetry of Al-Uzari and Al-Suwaidi revealed additional meanings of the houses of Baghdad in late eighteenth century. These texts highlighted a number of positive elements that add to the understanding of place, such as conversation, scent and imagination. In addition, these texts expressed the contrasting functions of houses. While they represented a high standard of privacy, and its interrelated issues of comfort and safety, they also represented significant social meaning for the public. These texts did not outline detailed architectural features of these houses, yet these nostalgic and spatial qualities promote more understanding of the houses in this period.

The literature of the early nineteenth century demonstrates more qualities of architecture and visual beauty, in addition to spiritual and social qualities. Al-Alusi notes that all houses in that period contained an open courtyard that provided light and air movement to reduce the excessive heat. These houses included typical domestic facilities, in addition to particular places to cool water for drinking, and underground rooms mainly used in summer. Al-Alusi notes that many houses in the late nineteenth century were built with two storeys and that

¹³⁵ Ra'of (ed.), *Tarekh hawadeth Baghdad wal Basrah*, p.75. The Arabic script is as follows:

"لما جئت من البصرة الى بغداد من العجم هاربا، والى رؤية أصحابي وأحبائي راغبا، رأيت أحبائي قد أبادهم الطاعون، إباد معهم سائر أهل الفضل... فأنثرت مذهب العزلة والأنفراد، واخترت طريقة النأي والبعد، وقعدت في البيت وحدي، واشتغلت بالكتب التي عندي

¹³⁶ Ra'of (ed.), *Tarekh hawadeth Baghdad wal Basrah*, p.79. The Arabic script is as follows:

فالشرع والرأي انا لانكون مع أحد، وبغداد لاتأتي الا لوزير عظيم

¹³⁷ Ra'of (ed.), *Tarekh hawadeth Baghdad wal Basrah*, p.76. The Arabic script is as follows:

لم أجد لذة في السلامة إلا صرت للبيت والكتاب جليسا

before that time, the houses were built with one storey, and their exterior walls were not very high¹³⁸. However, he identifies some luxurious houses that were built in the early nineteenth century like the house of his grandfather. He mentions that the houses of the rich were much bigger and had more ornamentation than other houses¹³⁹. According to these remarks, it can be assumed that most houses in the eighteenth century were built with one storey. Yet in the nineteenth century, two storey houses increased gradually, until they became the dominant style towards the end of that century. The poet Abdul-Baqi Al-Umari¹⁴⁰ wrote a poem describing a house of Sheikh Al-Alusi's grandfather:

The gallery of Shihabuddin is vaulted with prestige
It is celebrated with knowledge and recognised with grace
There are many rooms of contemplation in this house
As if the generous river of Talut was there
The most beautiful stars are jealous of this place
Since every noble man in the universe is subjected to envy¹⁴¹

The poet illustrates great features of these houses in these lines. He shows the luxurious aspects of their design, and he confirms that utilising the place for the purpose of knowledge added more beauty to the house. This house was built in the late eighteenth century, but it was renovated and extended in 1252/1836. These remarks indicate interlocking all dimensions of beauty, including social and learning beauty, generates an effective approach to housing. The poem outlines advanced and complex architectural qualities, which reflects the remarkable improvements in conditions of Baghdad in that period. The poem reflects the admiration of Al-Umari at the outstanding qualities of the house. It also indicates the social and educational efficiency of these houses, and the easy access they provide for the public. Another example of the houses that were built in the early decades of the nineteenth century is the house of Mohammed Saied Al-Mufti. Al-Alusi describes it in the following statement:

It is a fine house that has amazing architectural features. It was skilfully built, and it has a spacious courtyard. He [Mohammed Said] built a fascinating room inside this house, similar to the rooms in paradise, since its walls and roof are beautifully decorated¹⁴².

This statement describes high-status housing styles. It also reflects the advancement in architectural techniques and materials to a degree that the space becomes comparable with paradise. This house was a venue for a cultural forum for a long time¹⁴³. The extensive

¹³⁸ Ra'of (ed.), *Akhbaar Baghdad wa ma jawaraha min Al-Bilad*, p. 122.

¹³⁹ Ra'of (ed.), *Akhbaar Baghdad wa ma jawaraha min Al-Bilad*, p. 115.

¹⁴⁰ Abdul-Baqi Al-Umari is a prominent Iraqi poet and a scholar. He was born in Mosul north Baghdad in 1204/1789, and lived in Baghdad for a while. He died in Baghdad in 1278/1870 and he left a great poetry collection. See Ra'of (ed.), *Akhbaar Baghdad wa ma jawaraha min Al-Bilad*, p. 114.

¹⁴¹ Ra'of (ed.), *Akhbaar Baghdad wa ma jawaraha min Al-Bilad*, p. 116. The Arabic script is as follows:

رواق شهاب الدين في العز معقود	به العلم مشهور به الفضل مشهود
بغرفته كم غرفة لمؤمل	كان نهر طالوت بهاتيك معهود
لقد حسدت زهر النجوم تخومه	وكل رفيع القدر في الكون محسود

¹⁴² Ra'of (ed.), *Akhbaar Baghdad wa ma jawaraha min Al-Bilad*, p. 117. The Arabic script is as follows:

"هي دار لطيفة الوضع، بديعة السميت، محكمة البناء، واسعة الفناء، وقد أنشأ فيها غرفة تحاكي غرف الجنان، مزخرفة السقف والجدران"

¹⁴³ Cultural fora are special gatherings that are organised weekly. This phenomenon became more effective in Baghdad in the nineteenth century. These forums are either held at schools and mosques, or at large houses that have a specific area for this purpose. People discuss different matters, including scientific, political and social matters. They also share poems and other writings.

ornamentation in some rooms of the house indicates the great importance of public learning and social relations, since many of these large rooms were specified for guests, and for the frequent cultural fora. These rooms were heavily decorated, and they were also well oriented in the upper floors of big houses, in order to control the amount of sunlight and winds. The indication of the rivers that are mentioned in the Qur'an and the relationship of the rooms to paradise in these texts, suggest the continuous influence of Qur'anic analogy on the literature of early nineteenth century. The poet Al-Umari also wrote about the same house of Mohammed Saied Al-Mufti, asserting its attractive features inspired scholars to write about it:

This house was built by Saied, the happy man in both this life and the hereafter
 He had excellent vision that gave the house significant characteristics
 The one who resides in this house and the one who visits it are the happiest
 It also provides safety and prevents disasters
 By God I swear, this house is a sanctuary for graces
 I wonder how many secrets are in this house that lurk in its corners¹⁴⁴

This poem draws an inclusive image of the attributes of houses that provide such a pleasing atmosphere. The overall meaning of the house is the outcome of the interrelationship between all these features. These influential elements include spiritual inspiration, sophisticated vision and social pleasure, expressed through other values such as generosity, kindness, safety and protection, in addition to knowledge and learning. In another poem, Al-Umari expresses his appreciation of his own house in eastern Baghdad:

Is this a gorgeous doll in a castle or is it a bride?
 That has a necklace made of stars from Gemini
 When it appeared it manifested itself and beautified The Zawra'
 With its attractiveness and ornamentations¹⁴⁵

In contrast to other poems that reflect the outstanding features of the houses from within, these lines are among the few that portray these houses from the outside. Because houses were attached to each other, and overlooked relatively narrow streets, the exterior of the house offered fewer interesting qualities than its interior. However, it seems that the progression in architectural techniques expanded to include both the interior and exterior of houses. The mention of bright objects like jewellery and stars indicates the prosperity and loveliness of the place. Also the bride and the castle symbolise notable architectural development that reminded the poet of historical notions of wealthy kingdoms. Al-Umari associates his pleasant impressions in this poem with the overall image of Baghdad, which indicates the improvement in Baghdad's visual beauty as well.

The representation in the texts of early nineteenth century Baghdad revealed a considerable advancement in all dimensions of beauty, and the interrelationships between all these measures provided an outstanding image of houses in this period. Although it is obvious that

¹⁴⁴ Ra'of (ed.), *Akhbaar Baghdad wa ma jawaraha min Al-Bilad*, p. 118. The Arabic script is as follows:

بسعيد الدارين بنيت دارا	ميزتها أنظاره بمزايا
أسعد الناس حلها وسعيد	فأمننا بها حلول الرزايا
هي والله للفضائل مأوى	كم خبايا منها تقل الزوايا

¹⁴⁵ Ra'of (ed.), *Akhbaar Baghdad wa ma jawaraha min Al-Bilad*, p. 113. The Arabic script is as follows:

دمية القصر هذه أم عروس	قلدتها نجومها الجوزاء
وتجلت حين انجلت فتجلت	بحلاها وحليها الزوراء

the houses that reached these high standards belonged to the rich and to the well-known scholars, these measures later gradually developed and expanded to a wider range of houses. In comparison to the houses of the eighteenth century, literature represented their social and spiritual qualities, but the material qualities were not reflected expressively as they were in nineteenth century literature. However, the social and spiritual qualities of these homes remained constant, which confirms the need for further investigation of these qualities.

5.4 Summary and Discussion

The textual representation in this chapter endeavoured to signify the nostalgic and spatial themes that are discounted in the conventional historiography of Baghdad. The literature and poetry of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries emphasised diverse measures of beauty. These measures were explored in this chapter in relation to architectural and urban spaces that are also typically represented in conventional sources. The aim is to elaborate on these familiar spaces in this research, in order to discover the hitherto undetermined qualities in their common representation. These spaces include the beauty dimensions of the whole city, the environment of the river, the multiple meanings of gardens, the understanding of learning centres, the integrative attributes of markets, in addition to the social aspects of houses.

In general, conventional methods present these urban spaces as mute components, which are solely identified through material description and historical documentation. On the other hand, the alternative method opens up a wide range of opportunities to attain more understanding of these spaces. It emphasises the interlocking process between all measures of beauty and all elements that offer meaning to place. The literary representation promotes various measures of beauty as indicators useful to discover and comprehend the ignored themes and spaces. However, the representations most discussed in this chapter are social and soulful beauties, since they are less emphasised in conventional historiography. The reading of the texts in this chapter confirmed that these two measures were prevalent in place, unlike substantive beauty that is amenable to changes.

The writings of the scholars of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries are diverse and enriching, and they reflect different circumstances and various meanings of the history of the city. However, the analysis of the texts suggested a constant beauty, since the vision of these scholars juxtaposes all elements that offer meaning to the place. The textual representation provided further meanings of the city, and asserted the significance of additional overlooked spaces, such as the soulful and social beauty of Karkh, the bridge of Baghdad, learning centres, coffee shops, and houses. In addition, the representation enabled more understanding of the river's environment and the image of the city as a whole. It also illustrated remarkable themes that assist in the discovery of the neglected meanings of these spaces. Among the themes explored in the texts were love, communication, scent, conversation, colour and taste.

Although the representation of the late eighteenth century involved sadness and grief, these modes are mixed with positive memories and descriptions of outstanding beauty, social contentment, and great city atmosphere. On the other hand, the atmosphere of the early nineteenth century seems to be happier. The representations assert the important role of harmony in the design of cities, which allowed overlapping of public and private facilities

that contributed to the coherence of the city. For example, the similarity in building and planning styles between mosques and houses added social qualities to private houses, and established a great harmony between different spaces in the city. This intermingling of spaces enabled more interaction between them, to a degree that the mosques were also called houses, as knowledge would reside and alleviate in both places, increasing the comfort and harmony of a place. The representations indicated that the urban fabric of attached buildings strengthened social ties and introduced a successful social experience. Yet this success was often difficult to achieve due to continuous changes in conditions and population.

The textual representations transformed architectural elements into the qualitative realm, interacting with other values to reveal love and affection for the city. The interlocking aspects of all elements of interpretation - including spiritual, scientific, and social criteria - presented a dynamic method which promoted a continuous interconnection between components of the past, and between the past and present. The richness and variety of outcomes of textual representation confirmed the unique role of the interpretation of literature and poetry in providing fruitful ideas that may change our perspective on history and help to expand our methods of historical writing.

6. The Travelogues of Baghdad: Representing Reflective Themes

6.1 The Role of the Travelogues in the Representation of History

The textual analysis in Chapter Five highlighted the role of poetry and narratives in representing the urban history of Baghdad in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. These texts were written by scholars, some of whom stayed in Baghdad for a short period and others who spent the greatest part of their lives there. The constant movement of scholars into and out of the city influenced their writings to a great extent. They enjoyed living in the city, and expressed a great deal of appreciation of its environment, architecture and social life. They also articulated sad emotions of sentimentality and longing, especially when they were away from the city. The interpretation of these texts outlined significant nostalgic and spatial themes that are overlooked in conventional historiography. These themes were represented in an expressive mode, which indicates the feelings, spirit and character of the place and the people.

This chapter explores the reflective themes outlined in the travelogues of this period. Travel writers, in general, indicated highly inquisitive attitudes, and they often “reflected on the pleasure that their commentaries might offer the reader”¹. In addition, the context of these writings was influenced by other factors, including the purpose of the visit, the experience of each individual, and the knowledge and background of those travellers. The travel narratives of Baghdad in this period can be designated as personal travel diaries, written by people who had the motive to explore ‘other’ cultures, collect antiquities, and respond to the requests of authority. Various travellers of this period displayed a passion for travelling as the primary means to learn about history “while simultaneously perceiving travel narratives, history books, historical paintings, and architectural ruins to be modes of vicarious travel through time and space”². These spatial and temporal alterations enacted by travel writings, have not been fully addressed in conventional historiography. However, the Europeans’ passion for travel and discovery in Baghdad and other cities in the region was often interrelated with other colonial causes.

In contrast to the theme of expression which is exposed in poetry and local historical narratives, the theme of discovery usually distinguishes travelogues from other types of historical writing. In general, discovery involves observing, revealing, finding and interpreting, in addition to disclosing facts and documents. The theme of discovery in the eighteenth century took a broader meaning, when it attempted to organise different interpretations of specific issues in society, such as sociability and entertainment. Chloe

¹ Chard, C 1999, *Pleasure and guilt on the grand tour: travel writing and imaginative geography, 1600-1830*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, p. 2.

² Boyer, *The city of collective memory*, p. 228.

Chard classifies travel writings at the end of the eighteenth century into two categories; the romantic view of travel, and the touristic view³. The romantic view states that travel is a form of personal adventure that holds out a realisation of the self through the exploration of the other. It also entails crossing symbolic as well as geographical boundaries, and invites different forms of danger and destabilisation. The second approach is the view of the tourist “who recognises that travel might constitute a form of personal adventure, and might entail danger and destabilisation, but ... attempts to keep the more dangerous and destabilising aspects of the encounter with the foreign at bay”⁴. Although she identifies them as opposing views, these two views seem to be different versions of the same thing, rather than opposing observations, because both approaches outline discovery and entail danger at a certain level.

In addition to romantic and touristic views, the travel writings of Baghdad in this period show purposeful and self-oriented approaches that involved a great amount of decisive exploration. In addition, the personal adventures in these writings were devoted to representing the other through personal judgements. These travelogues indicated few romantic intentions: the travellers experienced dangerous situations, yet they incorporated fewer emotional expressions. Those travellers were keen to prevent danger and destabilisation, and they were determined to complete their tasks quickly and leave the city. The degree of familiarity with and awareness of particular matters of Baghdad also influenced the travellers’ interpretation of different characteristics of the city. Unlike the poets and regional scholars of Baghdad, who were familiar with the place, and with the language and all other aspects of the society, the travellers needed to discover the unfamiliar. This usually entails problems in understanding the society in discovery, and therefore acquires additional effort and time to learn the rules and norms.

Travellers recorded the things that they were able to observe in their visits. Hence, this kind of literature can be located in the domains of topography and geography, rather than social and cultural history. However, all travellers were also interested in writing about the history of Baghdad, regardless of their own specialities. Since history is a complex discipline of ideas and transmitted knowledge, the writing of history in these travelogues embodies some kind of invention. The differentiation of ‘invention’ and ‘discovery’ is a fine line, which makes it difficult to distinguish each phenomenon discretely. I propose that this period was the initial stage of invention of the history of Baghdad. The combined themes of discovery and invention became the focus of successive writers. The ambiguity of travellers’ writings allowed historians to suggest interpretations for specific events. These interpretations stimulated more invention in historical studies.

Although conventional studies of Baghdad in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries referred frequently to the travelogues, superficial reading of these travelogues resulted in a noticeable miscount of the significant ideas presented in these writings. These studies are usually content with literal translations, and with single methods of interpretation. Thus, travelogues present an additional source of literature that needs to be investigated in depth. Analysis of these writings is essential to the study of the urban history of Baghdad, since they encompass additional views from outside. This kind of literature is fruitful in the domains of topography and geography rather than social and cultural history, since it provided a more accurate investigation in mapping and geographical fields. The traveller’s interpretation depends hugely on their observations of the outer appearance of things. These

³ Chard, *Pleasure and guilt on the grand tour*, p. 11.

⁴ Chard, *Pleasure and guilt on the grand tour*, p. 11.

observations are important for this study, since they combine different views towards a more constructed understanding, consistent with the objectives of the alternative method for historiography pursued in this thesis.

Although this chapter is focused on the travelogues of late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, it is useful to briefly describe the history of travelogues before the eighteenth century in order to recognise the different types of travellers to Baghdad and the various attitudes in their writing.

6.2 A History of Travellers and Travel Writing before the 18th Century

Travel literature has been an important part of Baghdad's culture and history since the thriving of Baghdad as a centre of learning and knowledge by 278/892⁵. Due to easy movement between Baghdad and adjacent cities in the region, the opening of new schools, and the establishment of bookshops, scholars were encouraged to travel and stay in Baghdad for some time. Those scholars wrote their travel observations in a form of historical books, as the subject of history received much attention at that time, along with other branches of knowledge. These writings mainly focused on the events associated with the rulers rather than the urban forms of the city. Yet they include remarkable indications of architectural and urban history of Baghdad.

The book '*Baghdad*', written by Ibn Taifur in 280/893, is among the earliest books that represent this kind of literature. Other historians who wrote about Baghdad are Ibn Al-Jawzi (d.597/1200), Ibn Al-Qufti (d.646/1248), Al-Qazwini (d.682/1283) and Ibn Al-Futi (d. 723/1324)⁶. Yet, the most profound travelogue at that time was the travel narrative of the Moroccan traveller, Ibn Battuta. This traveller visited Baghdad in 737/1337 on his way to Makkah, when Baghdad was the gate for Muslim's pilgrims to Makkah. Ibn Battuta's writing portrayed numerous buildings in the city, including schools, mosques, *Suq Al-Thulatha*' (Tuesday market), and the bridge. In 740/1340, the traveller Ahamullah Mustawfi visited Baghdad and wrote about the city, describing the *Madrasa Mustansiriyya* building as the most beautiful building in Baghdad⁷. The cultivation of travel literature in this period indicates stability and safety in the region. The reading of these travelogues suggests the incentive to write was to express admiration for the unique attributes of Baghdad, and to contribute to general knowledge and learning. Thus, the traveller's approach of this period can be considered as inspirational and appealing in intent.

The reputation of Baghdad's beauty and knowledge continued to attract many travellers from the adjacent cities. During the intermittent Ottoman rule of Baghdad, a number of travellers visited from Turkey and reported their observations. The Bosnian historian, teacher, geographer and cartographer, Nasuh Matrakci is one of the eminent travellers in the sixteenth century. Matrakci visited Baghdad in 943/1537 with the Ottoman *sultan* Suleyman Al-Qanuni⁸. He drew a unique map of Baghdad that shows both parts of the city, the river, the city wall, the bridge, and a number of mosques and tombs. This map is an important document of sixteenth century Baghdad. It provides crucial information about the structure of

⁵ This year marked the return of the Abbasids to Baghdad from Samarra. They chose eastern Baghdad as their settlement and abandoned the round city. See chapter three for more details.

⁶ For more details see Al-Warid, *Hawadeth Baghdad fi 12 qarn*, pp.122, 134, 143, 151.

⁷ Al-Warid, *Hawadeth Baghdad fi 12 qarn*, p.153.

⁸ The *sultan* visited Baghdad shortly after the Ottomans controlled it in 940/1534.

the city and its components (Figure 34). Al-Warid considers this map the first complete map of Baghdad since its establishment⁹. This map focused strongly on the river as if Nasuh imagined Baghdad to be a book lying open, with the river as the book-binding.



Figure 34: Sixteenth century Baghdad by Nasuh Al-Matrankci [Ayduz 2008]

In the seventeenth century, the Turkish traveller and historian Evliya Celebi (Mohammed Dhilli), visited Baghdad in 1066/1655 and recorded his observations about Baghdad's urban heritage in his famous book '*Seyahatname*' (Book of Travels) that consists of ten parts. He observed there was a *Sufi* Hospice occupying part of *Madrasa Mustansiriyya*, and mentioned that Baghdad contained six thousand wells and a hundred water spouts or *siqayas*¹⁰. This traveller visited Baghdad for the second time in 1066/1655 and wrote an interesting description of the castles, markets, and the baths in the city¹¹. Also another famous Turkish historian, Nadhmi Zadeh Murtadha visited Baghdad in the seventeenth century on his way to perform the Hajj in 1100/1688, and in the same year he finished writing his historical book

⁹ Al-Warid, *Hawadeth Baghdad fi 12 qarn*, p. 184.

¹⁰ These are water irrigation systems that are usually established by the rich and attached to the mosques for the public to drink for the love of God. See Sinclair, WF 1967, *The travels of Pedro Teixeira, with his "Kings of Harmuz" and extracts from his "Kings of Persia"*, trans, with further notes and an introduction by Donald Ferguson, Hakluyt Society, Kraus Reprint, Nendeln, Liechtenstein, p 52.

¹¹ Al-Warid, *Hawadeth Baghdad fi 12 qarn*, pp. 202-203.

‘Gulshn khulfa’¹². He depicted the situation of Baghdad at the time of his visit. In addition, he described Baghdad before the Mogul invasion as a paradise that no other city bears a resemblance to its beauty, its high castles, its fertile soil, and its luxurious situation¹³. The large number of Turkish travellers reflected upon the sequence of the Ottomans’ rule, with a passion for further discovery of the newly controlled city. However, some travellers visited Baghdad and wrote their observations as part of the trend for travel that was developed at that time¹⁴. So, the traveller’s writings of this period can be illustrated as a mix of personal adventure and political interest.

In addition to Turkish travellers, travellers from the surrounding area visited Baghdad in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and recorded their observations. An example of those travellers is the Syrian scholar Sheikh Mustafa bin Kemal Al-Din Al-Siddiqi, who visited Baghdad in 1139/1726, and described many mosques, tombs, and other unique buildings in his writing¹⁵. Local travellers and historians continued to include their observations in their narratives, and they utilised poetry to illustrate historical events. These writings are considered as contributions to history as well as to travel writings. Examples of these scholars include Abdul-Qader Al-Baghdadi (d.1093/1682), Ahmed bin Abdullah Al-Gurabi (d.1102/1690), Abdullah Al-Suwaidi (d.1174/1760), Abdullah Al-Fakhri (d. 1188/1774) and Abdul-Rahman Al-Suwaidi (d.1200/1785)¹⁶. The incentive behind these writings is the strong desire to document different events and preserve their memory, in addition to contributing to general knowledge, and appreciating the city’s unique characteristics. So, this approach to travel writing can be outlined as a documentary approach.

The large number of scholars who visited Baghdad throughout the city’s history, and recorded their observations, points to its distinctive character, which attracted such huge numbers of visitors. It also shows the great attention to travel writing as an effective tool to learn about other cities and deal with their history. These travel records took various shapes, including travel narratives, rhetoric, poetry, history books, city maps and architectural measurements. Because of the similarity of social and political circumstances between Baghdad and other neighbouring cities, the travellers who visited Baghdad from the surrounding area experienced fewer difficulties in understanding the life and history of the city compared with European travellers. Nevertheless, some of these writings were largely affected by political influences, and thus focussed on certain aspects, and exaggerated real events.

Regarding European travel writings on Baghdad, it seems the first European traveller visited Baghdad by the mid-sixteenth century¹⁷. The number of such travellers increased in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, due to growing colonial interests. European travel writings reflected contrasting approaches; on the one hand they showed a curiosity for discovery and appreciation of place, yet on the other hand, they embodied an unfamiliarity and intolerance of differences, which influenced their understanding of the city, and was reflected in their writings. According to Al-Warid, the Italian merchant, Cesar Federico was

¹² Al-Warid, *Hawadeth Baghdad fi 12 qarn*, p. 210.

¹³ Khoja, KA 2006, ‘Muqtatafat min kitab Gulshn Khulfa’ by Murtadha, NZ, *Arabic Translators International*, viewed 4 August 2012, <<http://www.atinternational.org/forums/showthread.php?t=7467>>.

¹⁴ Scholars travel to exchange ideas and learn from other scholars in the huge open Ottoman region.

¹⁵ Al-Warid, *Hawadeth Baghdad fi 12 qarn*, p. 217.

¹⁶ For more details about those historians see Al-Warid, *Hawadeth Baghdad fi 12 qarn*.

¹⁷ Al-Warid, *Hawadeth Baghdad fi 12 qarn*.p 188.

the first European traveller who visited Baghdad in 1563¹⁸. Federico wrote his observations about the city, and described the bridge, the houses, and the alleys.

In the seventeenth century, in addition to the Italians, other Europeans such as the French, Portuguese and Danish, were interested in tours to Baghdad. Among the travellers of the seventeenth century was the Portuguese traveller Pedro Teixeira, who visited Baghdad in 1604 and recorded significant remarks about the city. Teixeira described the bridge, the river, the mosques, markets and the building materials, in addition to Baghdad's defence system¹⁹. He observed "more than four thousand weavers of wool, flax, cotton and silk, who are never out of work"²⁰. These products were all manufactured and used in Baghdad²¹. Teixeira also provided interesting remarks about the coffee houses of Baghdad, and how these public facilities were considered major places of entertainment for Baghdadis²². In addition, he portrayed the Baghdadi house that he resided in during his tour in Baghdad, which was overlooking the river, as "a very pleasant resort"²³. The remarks of Teixeira suggest a pleasing and healthy atmosphere, which is rarely mentioned in other historical sources of the same period, as these sources usually focused on political matters more than other aspects of the city.

Another traveller in this century was the Italian traveller Deulofeu, who visited Baghdad in 1024/1616, and portrayed a pleasing image of the markets full of silk material. It is interesting to note that this traveller became attached to the city and married a Baghdadi girl who joined him in his travel to Persia²⁴. In 1042/1632 the French traveller, Tavernier, passed through Baghdad on his way to India, and also visited Baghdad on his way back in 1063/1652. He wrote a comprehensive travel diary and provided a remarkable description of Baghdad²⁵. He drew a map of Baghdad showing the wall, the military castle and other buildings. In 1091/1680 the Danish traveller, O'Dyer, visited Baghdad and illustrated a map of the city in his travel book²⁶.

This study of the history of travel writings about Baghdad before the eighteenth century shows different kinds of travellers and different attitudes to travel writings throughout various stages in the history of the city. Despite these diversities, the remarks of all these travellers are important sources for Baghdad's historiography. These writings are not studied thoroughly in conventional sources. This escalates the need to further investigate these sources, as fruitful and enriching references that aid increase comprehension of the history of this period. Since this study is more focused on the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the travel writings of that period are discussed in more depth in the next section.

¹⁸ Al-Warid, *Hawadeth Baghdad fi 12 qarn*, p. 188.

¹⁹ Sinclair, *The travels of Pedro Teixeira*, pp 62, 64.

²⁰ Sinclair, *The travels of Pedro Teixeira*, p. 67.

²¹ Al-Warid, *Hawadeth Baghdad fi 12 qarn*, p. 197.

²² Sinclair, *The travels of Pedro Teixeira*, p. 62.

²³ Sinclair, *The travels of Pedro Teixeira*, p 63.

²⁴ Al-Warid, *Hawadeth Baghdad fi 12 qarn*, p. 196.

²⁵ See Tavernier, J B, Crooke, W & Ball, V 1977, *Travels in India*, 2nd edn, 2 vols., Oriental Books Reprint Corporation, New Delhi.

²⁶ For more details refer to Al-Warid, *Hawadeth Baghdad fi 12 qarn*, pp. 202-208. Note the names of the travellers in the book of Al-Warid are written in Arabic, and I transliterated them to English.

6.3 The Travelogues of Baghdad in the 18th and 19th Centuries

The eighteenth century witnessed an increase in English travellers to Baghdad, in addition to some French and German travellers, which suggests a diminishing interest by Italians and Portuguese in Baghdad. In 1145/1732, Carsten was the first English traveller who visited Baghdad in the eighteenth century, and wrote his observations²⁷. In 1179/1765 the German traveller Neibuhr arrived in Baghdad, and left in 1180/1766. Neibuhr wrote a detailed description of city's features. Yet the most remarkable work by this traveller is his map of Baghdad, which is considered the sole detailed map of late eighteenth century Baghdad. In the same period, the English traveller Jackson arrived Baghdad in 1181/1767, and he also drew a map of Baghdad²⁸.

From 1780 until the early years of the nineteenth century, more French travellers arrived at Baghdad. In 1194/1780 the doctor and French traveller, Mashie, visited Baghdad. This traveller made a unique discovery. He found an old Babylonian stone from the twelfth century BC with Cuneiform writing that illustrated the name *Bagdado* on it²⁹. In 1195/1781 another French traveller called Pushan visited Baghdad and described the defence system, and stated that Baghdad had successful trade activities. In 1215/1800, the French councillor, Russo, who was a friend of Pushan, arrived in Baghdad and wrote his observations about the city³⁰. In 1205/1791 the French traveller Olivier visited Baghdad and described the wall, the bridge and the markets. He also wrote about the social aspects of Baghdad³¹. The observations of both Neibuhr and Olivier are discussed later in this chapter.

The General English Consulate was established in Baghdad, in 1803³². Accordingly, intensive tours were launched to Baghdad, by English travellers. The English Resident in Baghdad, Claudius Rich, was among the early English travellers who journeyed to Baghdad. Rich arrived in Baghdad in January 1808 to work as a British Resident in Baghdad, and remained in this position until 1820³³. He wrote remarks about Baghdad, and he travelled in the surrounding area, recording his observations. Also in 1223/1808 the Russian traveller Tsyko Lela visited Baghdad and described the city and the bridge³⁴. In 1231/1816 James Buckingham visited Baghdad and recorded his observations in his book '*Travels in Mesopotamia*'. In 1232/1817 L. William Heude visited Baghdad and wrote a detailed book about this journey³⁵. Also in 1233/1818 an English painter called Kerr Porter visited Baghdad, and in 1825/1241 the American traveller William Fogg visited Baghdad and wrote about the life in the city.

²⁷ Al-Warid, *Hawadeth Baghdad fi 12 qarn*, p. 219. This traveller is not the German traveller Carsten Neibuhr who visited Baghdad by the end of the eighteenth century.

²⁸ Al-Warid, *Hawadeth Baghdad fi 12 qarn*, p. 225. Al-Warid notes that this book has been translated to the Arabic language by Selim Taha Al-Tiktrity.

²⁹ Al-Warid, *Hawadeth Baghdad fi 12 qarn*, p. 228. This unique discovery confirmed the age of the ancient site of Baghdad.

³⁰ Al-Warid, *Hawadeth Baghdad fi 12 qarn*, pp. 228-232.

³¹ Al-Warrak, *Baghdad bi-aqlam rahhalah*, p. 69. Also see Al-Warid, *Hawadeth Baghdad fi 12 qarn*, p.233.

³² Al-Warid, *Hawadeth Baghdad fi 12 qarn*, p. 233.

³³ Rich, CJ 1836, *Narrative of a residence in Koordistan, and on the site of ancient Nineveh: with journal of a voyage down the Tigris to Bagdad and an account of a visit to Shirauz and Persepolis*, 2 vols., J. Duncan, London, p. xxv.

³⁴ Al-Warid, *Hawadeth Baghdad fi 12 qarn*, p. 234.

³⁵ See Heude, W 1970, *A voyage up the Persian Gulf and a journey overland from India to England in 1817*, Gregg International, Westmead.

Other English travellers included Robert Mignan, who visited Baghdad in 1243/1827, and James Raymond Wellsted who visited in 1829/1245, and wrote the book *Travels to the City of Caliphs*³⁶. After the Mamluks' rule in Baghdad came to an end in 1831, the extensive British visits continued. Some of the travellers of this period were Fraser who visited Baghdad in 1250/1834, Keith who visited Baghdad in 1253/1837, and Peril who visited the city in 1257/1842³⁷. In 1269/1853, the British official Felix Jones surveyed Baghdad and produced a detailed map of the city³⁸. In his map, he included 63 quarters in eastern Baghdad, and 28 quarters in the western part (Figure 35). Jones noted that the conditions of the city had improved and that "much of the city, which had been washed away by floods, had been rebuilt"³⁹.



Figure 35: Baghdad in mid-nineteenth century by Felix Jones [Jones 1998]

The outlining of the different travellers to Baghdad suggests travelogues as a vital source for Baghdad's historiography, in addition to poetry and literature. The large number of these writings, and the variety and richness of their contextual expression designates their capability to uncover many aspects of the history of the city, and offer a 'particular spatialisation of knowledge'⁴⁰. This unique spatialisation of knowledge provided by the

³⁶ See Wellsted, JR & Ormsby 1968, *Travels to the city of the Caliphs, along the shores of the Persian Gulf and the Mediterranean: including a voyage to the coast of Arabia, and a tour on the Island of Socotra*, 2 vols., Gregg International, Farnborough, Hants.

³⁷ Al-Warid, *Hawadeth Baghdad fi 12 qarn*, pp. 238-244.

³⁸ See Jones, JF 1998, *Memoirs of Baghdad, Kurdistan and Turkish Arabia*, 1857, selections from the records of the Bombay Government, no. xliii, new series, Archive Editions, Great Britain. Also see Jawad & Susa, *Dalil kharitat Baghdad Al-Mufasssal*.

³⁹ Dabrowska, K & Hann, G 2008, *Iraq then and now: a guide to the country and its people*, Bradt Travel Guides, Chalfont St. Peter, p. 199.

⁴⁰ Boyer, *The city of collective memory*, p. 133.

travelogues and poetry, confronts conventional history writing, and provides alternative approaches to historical understanding. However, these writings, especially the travelogues written before the eighteenth century, are overlooked in conventional historiography. The travel writings of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries are partially represented in conventional sources, yet the method of representation is restricted to certain aspects rather than studying them as an effective method to deal with history and historical writing. Generally, the travel writings of Baghdad were recorded by two groups of travellers; regional travellers and colonial European travellers. The travelogues of each group were greatly influenced by their means of understanding of the city.

Travel writing experienced a dramatic change in modes through different periods of its history. In the early centuries of its foundation, travellers' writing styles were inspirational, emotional and appealing. By the fifteenth century, attitudes started to take a political overtone, influenced by personal aspirations. In the eighteenth century, regional writings expressed nostalgic and historical modes, while European writings indicated mixed modes of discovery and political curiosity. Although the colonial European approach strove to present the area as 'a domain ripe for domination'⁴¹, it provided a great source for assisting in understanding the history of Baghdad in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Thus, it is crucial to discuss some of these travelogues in this study, to outline their contribution to the historiography of Baghdad, and to correspond with the principles of the alternative method.

The travelogues of four travellers are discussed in the next sections, namely Niebuhr, Olivier, Rich and Buckingham. The writing of each traveller contributed to the study of Baghdad's history in diverse ways. While Niebuhr produced unique maps, Olivier wrote informative novels about the city. The travel writings of these two travellers are discussed in relation to the history of Baghdad in the late eighteenth century. As well, the official relationships of Rich and the descriptive manner of Buckingham constitute historiographical resource for the urban history of Baghdad in the early nineteenth century. The discussion of these various forms of writing highlights their potential to disclose hidden features of the urban history of Baghdad, and to develop understanding of that history.

6.3.1 The Mapping Efforts of Carsten Niebuhr

"Niebuhr's most successful plans are probably those of Cairo and Baghdad"⁴²

The German traveller Carsten Niebuhr contributed significantly to the mapping and exploration of Baghdad, and many other adjacent cities. Niebuhr was born in West Ludingworth in Germany in 1733⁴³. In 1760, he was invited to join the Arabian expedition of Frederick V of Denmark to Arabia Felix. This journey started in 1761 and ended in 1767⁴⁴. The group consisted of six experts in different areas, and Niebuhr was the surveyor and the geographer of the group. Their proclaimed aim was "to study the customs, language,

⁴¹ Black, E 2004, *Banking on Baghdad: the crossroads of conquest and commerce*, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., Hoboken, N.J, p. 70.

⁴² Hopkins, IWJ 1967, 'The maps of Carsten Niebuhr: 200 years after', in *Cartographic Journal*, vol. 4, no. 2, pp. 115-118.

⁴³ Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge 1833, *Lives of eminent persons*, Baldwin and Cradock, London, p. 2.

⁴⁴ Vernoit, SJ 2007-2012, 'Niebuhr, Carsten', in *Oxford Art Online*, Oxford University Press, viewed 4 May 2013, <<http://www.oxfordartonline.com:80/subscriber/article/grove/art/T062405>>.

geography, flora and fauna of Arabia, and also to collect and study copies of the Biblical manuscripts ... in Sinai”⁴⁵. The group started the journey by visiting Egypt, and then they travelled to Yemen, Hejaz, Oman and India. Because of the difficult travel conditions, all five colleagues of Niebuhr had died by the time he reached Bombay. On his way back to Copenhagen, he passed through the Persian Gulf, Shiraz and then Baghdad⁴⁶. He arrived at Baghdad in January 1766⁴⁷, and was continually taking notes and measurements for maps. From Baghdad he went up north to Mosul then to Aleppo, and he visited Damascus for few days⁴⁸.

Soon after returning to his homeland, Niebuhr compiled the results of the travels in his book *Travels through Arabia and Other Countries in the East*. This book included a detailed depiction of the natural history of Arabia, including climate, fauna, flora and geology, in addition to people’s manners, religion, character and governments⁴⁹. Yet the most important work of Niebuhr is his plans that have become valuable sources in historical research, and “brought travel writing to a new level of sophistication, especially with regards to archaeological investigation”⁵⁰. In relation to Baghdad’s historiography, Niebuhr’s writing contributed to the writing of Baghdad’s history. The English traveller Buckingham noted that since Niebuhr’s visit to Baghdad “there has been no traveller of eminence ... who has had any opportunity of examining the country between the Euphrates and the Tigris”⁵¹.

Niebuhr noted Baghdad had a large population compared with other cities in the East⁵². He indicated that the majority of Baghdad’s residents were Muslims⁵³, with a few Christians and Jews. He drew a detailed map of eighteenth century Baghdad (Figure 36). This map shows the two parts of the city, the wall and ditch, the gates, the castle, the markets and residential blocks. There is detailed plotting of streets and wells, but only a few buildings are shown on the plan. The buildings that are shown on the map include the *Saray*, the Castle, *Madrassa Mustansiriyya*, *Jami’ Al-Khulafaa’*, some *Sufi* hospices and some tombs⁵⁴. Hopkins suggests the reason for fewer buildings being illustrated by Niebuhr on the plan of Baghdad, compared with his Cairo plan, was because of “Niebuhr’s longer stay in Cairo, and the visit to Baghdad was towards the end of his travels”⁵⁵. The other achievement of Niebuhr was accurately locating the site of the round city of Baghdad. The task of locating the old city site was difficult for many travellers, because the ruins of the round city were very hard to identify, due to continuous flooding, and the accumulation of buildings on the site. Many travellers mistakenly suggested other locations for the city, which makes the findings of Niebuhr remarkable.

⁴⁵ Scoville, S 1977, ‘Beschreibung von Arabien by Carsten Niebuhr’ (book review), in *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, vol. 8, no. 2, pp. pp. 275-276.

⁴⁶ Hopkins, ‘The maps of Carsten Niebuhr’, pp. 115-118.

⁴⁷ Al-Warrak, *Baghdad bi-aqlam rahhalah*, p. 20.

⁴⁸ Niebuhr & Heron, *Travels through Arabia and other countries in the East*, p. 178.

⁴⁹ He uses the word ‘Bedouins’ which illustrate the moving Arabs more than the word ‘Arabs’.

⁵⁰ Vernoit, ‘Niebuhr, Carsten’.

⁵¹ Buckingham, *Travels in Mesopotamia*, p. xi.

⁵² Al-Warrak, *Baghdad bi-aqlam rahhalah*, p. 11.

⁵³ Niebuhr shares with other travellers the idea of relating Muslims to their prophet, as he calls them Mahomets, which indicates a superficial understanding of people, religion, and history.

⁵⁴ These buildings were presented in numbers on the map.

⁵⁵ Hopkins, ‘The maps of Carsten Niebuhr’, pp. 115-118.

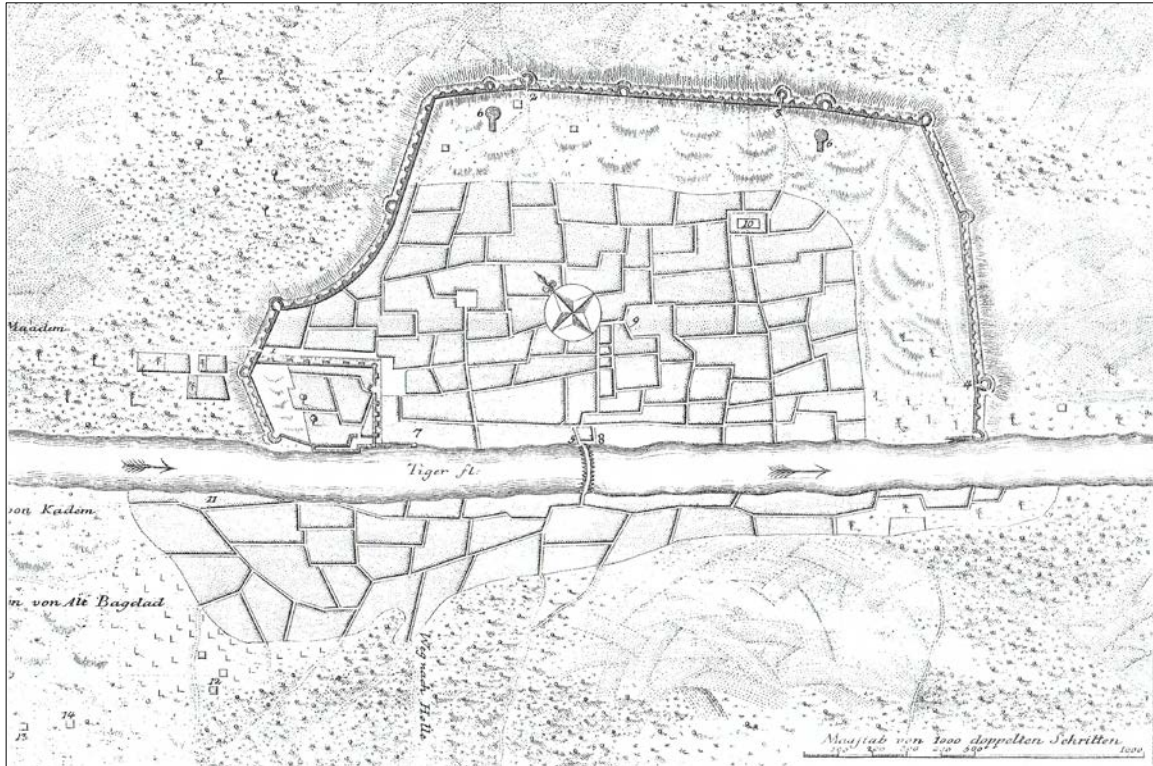


Figure 36: Eighteenth century Baghdad by Carsten Niebuhr [Niebuhr 1983]

In addition to the city's topography, Niebuhr's map of Baghdad was accompanied by reflections on its history and government. He dedicated a huge part of his writing to the history of governors, such as Hassan *pasha* and Ahmed *pasha*, and narrated other political accounts from the beginning of the eighteenth century. Historians consider Niebuhr's work interesting "both from a historical and a scientific point of view"⁵⁶, since his travel writing was dedicated to historical and scientific accounts, in addition to the geographical. However, the reading of Niebuhr's historical accounts of Baghdad reveals some confused narratives that were transmitted vaguely. Examples of these accounts are the story of Sheikh Abdul-Qader Al-Gilani and his pair of shoes, the story of the accusation of Musa Al-Kadhem and the story of Bahloul⁵⁷. Therefore, Niebuhr's writings would have been more precise (like his maps) if they had focused on geography and topography. However, his historical writing report issues that can relate to historical understanding and challenge the limitation of issues in conventional historiography.

Similar to other travellers, Niebuhr wrote about the surrounding areas of Baghdad and pointed out historical sites near it, such as Akarkouf from 2000 BC, and Mada'en, located about sixteenth kilometres eastern Baghdad, from 200 BC⁵⁸. The constant reporting on ancient sites in travel writing adds another effective scope to these writings and makes history writings complex. In addition, Niebuhr's writing focussed on tribal issues⁵⁹, indicating his curiosity to learn about those people, and at the same time to arrange for his safe travel, since

⁵⁶ Scoville, 'Beschreibung von Arabien by Carsten Niebuhr', pp. 275-276.

⁵⁷ For more stories see Al-Warrak, *Baghdad bi-aqlam rahhalah*, pp. 19, 25, 27.

⁵⁸ Al-Warrak, *Baghdad bi-aqlam rahhalah*, p. 32.

⁵⁹ Tribal issues are often connected to political issues. See Chapter Three in this thesis.

“all travellers complain of the robberies of these Bedouins”⁶⁰. Niebuhr noted that the produce of the Baghdad region was mostly wheat, rice and dates, which did not meet the ‘Europeans desires’⁶¹. In addition, he pointed out many Europeans who resided in the city were medical practitioners who were also missionaries⁶². This indicates that subjective ‘desires’ are an important part of historiography that has always been dismissed in the pursuit of historical truth. Niebuhr described Baghdad’s city wall as weak and built of baked bricks, and noted that there was a ditch outside the wall, yet it was dry. He stated that there were no strong defence systems outside the city, enabling the Europeans to occupy it easily⁶³. These remarks reflect the colonial attitudes in the writing of Niebuhr. However, this travel article is significant to the historiography of Baghdad, since it outlines many features of Baghdad’s history.

Regarding the Tigris River, Niebuhr estimated the width of the river to be around 600-620 feet. He referred to the topographic differences between the two parts of Baghdad, stating the eastern part was slightly more elevated than the western part⁶⁴. This suggests elevated land was among the reasons for choosing the eastern part to be centre of subsequent governments over a long period. Niebuhr indicated the bridge of Baghdad was weak, constituting thirty four boats tied together with strong chains. He was amazed at the fertile lands between the Tigris and the Euphrates which were intersected by numerous canals. He described the land as “so rich a tract of country.[that] naturally invites its inhabitants to cultivate it”⁶⁵. These remarks in relation to the Tigris River and the bridge avoid emotion, and they partially correspond to the conventional reading of these sources.

Niebuhr portrayed narrow roads inside the neighbourhoods of Baghdad, yet he pointed out the markets’ pathways were wider, and covered with pointed arches. He identified some mosques and tombs, and he estimated that about twenty mosques had minarets, and the rest were without. He was amazed by the decorations and calligraphy in the mosques and other public buildings, and he tried to copy some of these writings and include them in his book. He described the dome of the mosque of Sheikh Abdul-Qader Al-Gailani as great, but not magnificent⁶⁶. In addition, he mentioned other public buildings, and referred to a hospital, twenty two *khans*, and many public baths or *hammams*.

One of Niebuhr’s concerns was the lack of bookshops, since he couldn’t find a bookshop that sold old books in Baghdad. He noted that the only way to sell old books in Baghdad was through auctions of deceased estates. He pointed out that Istanbul could be considered the only place in the Ottoman Empire, where Europeans could buy old books in Arabic, Persian, and Turkish languages⁶⁷. Niebuhr also provided remarkable notes about the establishment of the central committee that was responsible for discussing important issues, and making decisions. The place where this group of high officers and religious scholars met was usually called ‘*Dewan Baghdad*’. Niebuhr points out that this group was established during the rule of Suleyman Abu Leila (1749-1762)⁶⁸, and the decisions of this group played a significant

⁶⁰ Niebuhr, C & Heron, *Travels through Arabia and other countries in the East*, p. 175.

⁶¹ Al-Warrak, *Baghdad bi-aqlam rahhalah*, p. 34.

⁶² Al-Warrak, *Baghdad bi-aqlam rahhalah*, p. 36.

⁶³ Al-Warrak, *Baghdad bi-aqlam rahhalah*, p. 14.

⁶⁴ Al-Warrak, *Baghdad bi-aqlam rahhalah*, pp. 19-20.

⁶⁵ Niebuhr & Heron, *Travels through Arabia and other countries in the East*, p. 173.

⁶⁶ Al-Warrak, *Baghdad bi-aqlam rahhalah*, p. 19.

⁶⁷ Al-Warrak, *Baghdad bi-aqlam rahhalah*, p. 34.

⁶⁸ Al-Warrak, *Baghdad bi-aqlam rahhalah*, p. 48.

role in appointing the governors and supporting their rule. Although these notes document an important historical event, they indicate Niebuhr's interest in the political issues of Baghdad.

Niebuhr describes lofty houses that were built with bricks. Each house had a square court in the middle, and most rooms overlooked the court, since these houses had few or no openings to the road. He depicted the lower cooling room, or the *sirdab*, and the *badger*, which is a device that allows air circulation inside the *sirdab* to cool the room. It is extraordinary how this housing style, which originated in ancient Ur south of Baghdad more than three thousand years ago⁶⁹, was maintained until the mid-twentieth century. This indicates the long existence of the courtyard houses as a part of the area's architectural history and typology. The indication of houses as 'lofty' suggests an improvement in housing conditions and increase in population, compared with the single-storey houses of the eighteenth century. This is one of Niebuhr's unique remarks that contradict the common perception of the houses of this period, which portrays them as ruined and unattractive. These differing opinions are discussed in Chapter Seven in more depth.

It is apparent that Niebuhr's concerns about Europeans' authority and acceptance in Baghdad, their trade, and their safety, influenced his travel writings, and created a barrier to a pure travel experience that involves observing, finding and interpreting to seek additional knowledge about the world. Yet his writings are significant, especially the town plans and the systematic geographical and topographical statistics. His personal observations about the architectural qualities of Baghdad refer to the architectural style that organised the central concept of the system, rather than an architectural typology that established particular connection to place. Nonetheless, these writings are particularly fruitful sources for the historiography of Baghdad, which need to be examined thoroughly to disclose more unknown facts about the history of Baghdad.

6.3.2 The Inclusive Writings of Guillaume Antoine Olivier

The Frenchman, Olivier, is another traveller who visited Baghdad in the late eighteenth century. His visit was part of his obligation to the government of France to tour the cities that were under Ottoman control. Olivier was born in 1756. In his thirties he became famous as an entomologist and a traveller. He visited Baghdad in 1791 and wrote his personal observations about the city and its history. His travelogues are important to this study, since they pay considerable attention to outlining the history of Baghdad. Olivier writes of the history of Baghdad from the time of its foundation. In addition, his writings depict Baghdad about three decades after Niebuhr's visit. His two travel books are, '*Atlas to illustrate the travels in the Ottoman Empire, Egypt, and Persia*', which was published in 1802, and '*Entomology or natural history of insects (1808) and the trip to the Ottoman Empire, Egypt and Persia*', which was published in 1808.

Olivier's intensive focus on historical accounts of Baghdad resulted in a mixed combination of impressions of the history of Baghdad. However, his historical remarks are valuable for this study because they contradict Baghdad's conventional history. For example, Olivier stated that Baghdad had no parallel among the cities under Ottoman control. He emphasised its wealthy conditions during the Abbasid period, stating that Baghdad was shining for five centuries as the centre of a huge empire, and that it was a large centre for trade between the

⁶⁹ Warren & Fethi, *Traditional houses in Baghdad*, p.18.

east and the west⁷⁰. He notes that even in the period following the Mogul invasion, the city maintained parts of its glory and remained an important trade centre and a central land port for the Hajj caravans⁷¹. He also pointed out the various political powers that took control of the city throughout different periods of history. In contrast to conventional resources, these observations reveal a significant perspective on the continued prosperity of Baghdad after the Abbasid period, which is not indicated in conventional historiography. Olivier's remarks indicate admiration and appreciation of the city's features in history. However, his novels sometimes examined specific aspects of the city's history, and overlooked other important aspects, resulting in a partial meaning. Examples of this are the emphasis on the prosperity of the Abbasids' period, and the superficial attention to political issues.

Similar to Niebuhr's procedure, Olivier depicts the surroundings of Baghdad. He considers the eastern part of the city as the city of Baghdad, stating that Baghdad lies on a plain on the right bank of the river⁷². He describes the city wall, and notes that the city is surrounded by a big deep trench and high walls that are well maintained. This wall contained many towers of different sizes, and had a wide base, becoming narrower at the top. Olivier noted that the city wall did not continue on the river's edge, which was an unusual practice, compared to other cities in the Ottoman Empire⁷³. He stated that the city had four gates on the land sides and one gate from the river's side. Olivier specifies the western part of the city as the 'western suburb', describing it as a heavily populated suburb that ended with the ruins of old Baghdad, or the round city⁷⁴. He stated that this part was also fortified with a wall that has defence towers and a trench, but the wall on this side is less complex than the eastern wall. The wall of the western part of Baghdad does not exist in Niebuhr's plan produced in 1767. This suggests that the wall was built in the late eighteenth century, and indicates the increasing significance of the western part and its population towards the end of the eighteenth century.

Olivier notes that Baghdad was not a heavily populated city; it had large areas of unpopulated land in the eastern and southern parts of the city⁷⁵. He estimated the population of Baghdad in 1791 around 80,000⁷⁶, and he suggests that the reason for the decrease in population was the huge taxes imposed by *sultan* Murad in the mid-seventeenth century, which drove people outside the city. However, by the mid-eighteenth century, more people sought refuge in Baghdad because of the terrible circumstances in their own cities, resulting in a subsequent increase in population⁷⁷. Olivier also pointed to two developing towns outside Baghdad, which reflects the population increase. He refers to *Qaryat Musa Al-Kadhem* (village of *Musa Al-Kadhem*) on the western side to the north of the ruins of the old city, and to *Qaryat Al-Iman Al-A'tham* which was on the eastern side of the river opposite the first settlement⁷⁸. He pointed out the excavations in the site of the round city to remove bricks and other building materials from its ruins⁷⁹. The need for construction materials to build more quarters indicates the expansion of the city, and the rapid increase in the city's population. These

⁷⁰ Al-Warrak, *Baghdad bi-aqlam rahhalah*, p. 79.

⁷¹ Al-Warrak, *Baghdad bi-aqlam rahhalah*, pp. 82, 87.

⁷² The discussion in Chapter Three proved the existence of Karkh throughout history. However, travellers call the eastern Baghdad, Baghdad, because it comprised the main buildings, and the largest populated area.

⁷³ Al-Warrak, *Baghdad bi-aqlam rahhalah*, p. 73.

⁷⁴ Al-Warrak, *Baghdad bi-aqlam rahhalah*, p. 72.

⁷⁵ Al-Warrak, *Baghdad bi-aqlam rahhalah*, pp. 73, 75. These remarks are very similar to Niebuhr's remarks, which points to the different political and natural disasters that drove people outside the city.

⁷⁶ Al-Warrak, *Baghdad bi-aqlam rahhalah*, p. 86.

⁷⁷ Al-Warrak, *Baghdad bi-aqlam rahhalah*, p. 82.

⁷⁸ Al-Warrak, *Baghdad bi-aqlam rahhalah*, pp. 83, 84.

⁷⁹ Al-Warrak, *Baghdad bi-aqlam rahhalah*, p. 83.

observations thoroughly describe the urban features of the city, which makes them useful to urban historiography.

Olivier was impressed with the weather, and with the river's atmosphere. He stated that the weather of Baghdad was very healthy, because the city lay on a large plain, which exposes it to constant wind, and this wind helped to decrease disease. He expressed the pleasure of staying in a house that overlooked the Tigris River. He noted that the drinking water that came from *Dijla* (Tigris) was very healthy, and the sky was clear most of the time, which added extra beauty and comfort⁸⁰. He noticed that the extremely high heat during the day in summer is always followed by a pleasant breeze and moist air at night. He notes that the air was very fresh, which increases the appetites and decreases the feelings of tiredness. Olivier suggests that these conditions are the reasons behind the magical effects of Baghdad's nights, which are always celebrated and enjoyed⁸¹. He described the boat bridge that connects the two parts of Baghdad. In contrast to Niebuhr, who counted thirty four boats along the bridge, Olivier counted thirty boats instead. This shows the apparent change in the size of these boats⁸², and the different water levels that affect the stability of the bridge. Olivier created a plan to maintain the beauty of Baghdad. He suggested if the lands surrounding Baghdad were all planted, and if the water of both the Tigris and Euphrates rivers was well distributed to irrigate agricultural lands, there would be no land on earth healthier, livelier, richer and more productive, attractive and prosperous than Baghdad⁸³.

Olivier illustrated a fine picture of the markets and describes them as the best components of the city. He noted that the markets were wide and tidy, and that they were enjoyable to pass through. They had high vaulted roofs to provide shelter, and at the same time provide sufficient sun light through small openings. Olivier provided a detailed description of some significant buildings in both sides of the city such as *Madrassa Mustansiriyya*, *Jami' Al-Asifiyya*, the Talisman gate and the tomb of Zumurrud Khatun⁸⁴ (Figure 37).



Figure 37: The tomb of Zumurrud Khatun [Coke 1927]

⁸⁰ Al-Warrak, *Baghdad bi-aqlam rahhalah*, p. 96.

⁸¹ Al-Warrak, *Baghdad bi-aqlam rahhalah*, p. 93.

⁸² Al-Suwaïdi called these boats *sufun*, which shows that they were big boats. See Chapter Five of this thesis.

⁸³ Al-Warrak, *Baghdad bi-aqlam rahhalah*, p. 96.

⁸⁴ Al-Warrak, *Baghdad bi-aqlam rahhalah*, p. 83.

While he enjoyed the markets architecture and atmosphere, the alleys in residential neighbourhoods were disappointing, as they were narrow and unpaved⁸⁵. However, he portrays an efficient housing typology, Olivier states the houses often consist of no more than two storeys. The rooms are gathered on the perimeter of a square courtyard, which may have contained some palm trees. He points out the lower rooms or the *sirdab*, and he mentions the big room in the second level called '*dewan*' which was usually a big room oriented to the north and northeast directions to take advantage of beneficial winds, signifying the efficiency of such styles. The *dewan* was the main guest room and it was used for the family as well⁸⁶.

In addition to the natural environment, architecture, and history of Baghdad, Olivier conveyed his impressions of the people in Baghdad. He implies that the Baghdadis were sweeter than other people, and their elderly more educated and pleasant. Also the merchants were more effective and devoted to trade than other merchants in the empire. He commented on the level of honesty between merchants to such a degree that shop-keepers could leave their shops open for some time without fearing burglars. In addition, the religious extremism was less in Baghdad and envy was intolerable⁸⁷. These remarks indicate high values and stability in the society in the last decade of the eighteenth century.

These remarks show that Olivier's experience in Baghdad was pleasant. This atmosphere was related to the city's glorious past, and is thus reflected on his travel writing. His observations painted a picture of a beautiful environment that encompassed all measures of beauty. This image is also expressed by Baghdadi scholars and poets of this period. This indicates somewhat comparable reflections of beauty from both Baghdadi residents and foreign travellers. Yet, unlike the Baghdadis, the writings of European travellers were part of their job to provide evidence of the diversity of people, places and manners that existed in the world, rather than expressing the multiple dimensions of beauty of these places.

The writings of both Niebuhr and Olivier are significant sources of the material history of Baghdad in the late decades of the eighteenth century. The detailed descriptions of the urban forms of the city and the natural environment, in addition to various illustrations and maps, make them a fruitful source for the historiography of Baghdad. Yet the historical interpretations in these writings are confused, because they contain a mix of both truthful and misunderstood information. This confusion allowed more invention in the transmitted history of Baghdad. However, these travelogues are enriching and useful, because they contain features of the urban history of Baghdad, which are not highlighted in conventional historiography. This provides a means to resist conventional historiography, and to show the accounts that are hidden in conventional writing.

6.3.3 The Political Focus of Claudius Rich's Writings

The British Resident Claudius James Rich and his wife Mary were among those travellers who stayed in Baghdad in the early years of the nineteenth century. Claudius Rich was born in 1786⁸⁸ in Dijon in France, but moved to Bristol in England, as an infant⁸⁹. In his teenage

⁸⁵ Al-Warrak, *Baghdad bi-aqlam rahhalah*, pp. 77.

⁸⁶ Al-Warrak, *Baghdad bi-aqlam rahhalah*, pp. 75, 76. The guest room in houses was illustrated in the poetry of Al-Tamimi and Al-Omari in Chapter Five.

⁸⁷ Al-Warrak, *Baghdad bi-aqlam rahhalah*, p. 87.

⁸⁸ Alexander, *Baghdad in bygone days*, p. 1. In another source the author suggests that Rich was born in 1787. See Rich, *Narrative of a residence in Koordistan*, p. xv.

years Claudius showed an interest in learning other languages, such as Arabic, Turkish and Persian. In 1803 he was appointed to the East India Company as the British Resident in Baghdad in 1808⁹⁰. He remained in this position until 1821⁹¹. He was recognised as “one of the first to elevate the prestige of England in Mesopotamia”⁹². Rich led a number of travel excursions in Iraq and wrote his observations about them⁹³. However, his comments on Baghdad reflected his political role more than his travel interests.

Rich wrote several letters during his stay in Baghdad, yet those letters focused on politics rather than urban or geographic observations. He dealt with the issue of tribes, and he approached the people of Baghdad, including the governor, with superiority. This attitude prevented sincere contact with people, and makes his writings less beneficial for the study of the social history of the city. However, it is important to examine the few writings of Rich that concern other aspects of Baghdad, since he lived in Baghdad during a crucial time in the early nineteenth century, which was considered a starting point for many transformations in the society. In addition, his official contacts in Baghdad enabled him to make authoritative decisions, and placed him as part of the history of the city. Further, it is equally important for this study to discuss the letters of Rich’s wife, Mary, because they contain significant observations about Baghdad during that period. The letters of Rich were not published during his short life-time; he died in his thirties. Yet both his letters and his wife’s letters were collected later by Constance Alexander and published in her book *Baghdad in bygone days*. Based on the observations of Rich, Alexander outlines the image of Baghdad:

The city of the ‘*Thousand and one nights*’, its magical name conjures up a wonderful vision of Romance. Imagination paints the scene, a city of marble whiteness, from which rises the golden burnished domes of many mosques ... or perhaps it is of palaces which hide the lovely beauties of a *pasha*’s harem⁹⁴

These statements show that the European travellers of that period usually approach Baghdad with an imaginative picture that is inspired by the book ‘*The thousand and one nights*’. This picture goes back to Baghdad in the Abbasid period. The traveller connected that magic picture to his present time and imagined the palaces of the Mamluk *pasha* to be similar. Yet, she points out the condition of the city as Rich viewed it in 1808:

The Baghdad of reality presented no spectacle. It was a dirty town with narrow streets and ill-kept walls. Its mosques and bazaars were many, but they had no outstanding feature or merit more than any other town of Turkey ... It was certainly a big trade mart and an important town ... The position of the town was the key to its suitability⁹⁵

These observations refer to the material beauty of Baghdad in the early nineteenth century. The image suggested by Rich is emptied of any measure of beauty, which contradicts the

⁸⁹ Alexander, *Baghdad in bygone days*, p. 1.

⁹⁰ Rich led excursions to the ancient sites of Babylon in south Baghdad and the Kurdish region north east of Baghdad and wrote his travel remarks about those places.

⁹¹ He died in 1821. See Alexander, *Baghdad in bygone days*. Also see Rich, *Narrative of a residence in Koordistan, and on the site of ancient Nineveh*.

⁹² Alexander, *Baghdad in bygone days*, p. 48.

⁹³ Rich, *Narrative of a residence in Koordistan*, p. xvii.

⁹⁴ Alexander, *Baghdad in bygone days*, p. 30.

⁹⁵ Alexander, *Baghdad in bygone days*, pp. 30, 31.

outstanding beauty of the city that is portrayed by Baghdadi scholars. Rich's notes indicate that he was expecting to see golden domes and spectacular physical features of the city, yet he saw the opposite. However, he pointed out the position of the city, and its vibrant trade activities as among the positive aspects of Baghdad. These reflections show the strong connection between the objective of the visit and the interpretation of the city forms. There is no doubt that the city forms experienced some disturbances due to the floods and sieges, and the material characteristics of Baghdad in early nineteenth century cannot be compared to the Baghdad of the Abbasids. However, the literature of the nineteenth century reflects a beautiful environment, and attractive material beauty, in addition to social and spiritual beauty.

It is striking how the image of Baghdad in the minds of European travellers was inspired by the book '*The Thousand and one nights*', or what is known as the *Arabian Nights*. This book consists of a thousand stories that were written by anonymous authors in uncertain dates, in the ninth century. These stories were created for the purpose of the entertainment for some kings in that period. Because of the increase in translation attitudes in the ninth century⁹⁶, historians believe that some of these stories were influenced by Persian and Indian tales. Many of these stories were said to have happened in Baghdad, because that was then the centre of the Islamic world. These stories comprised some true images of Baghdad, yet were also full of myths and imagination. Nevertheless, these stories were strongly regarded by the travellers as representatives of the history of Baghdad, and this was reflected in their travel writings. As a result, imaginative aspects began to occupy a large space in historical understanding, and created the representational problems of conventional historiography, such as repetition and the strange variety of discourse suggested by Said⁹⁷.

In 1704 the French antiquary and archaeologist Antoine Galland translated the book '*The thousand and one nights*' with some omissions, and he became famous as the first European translator of these tales. Galland's version of the tales appeared in twelve volumes between 1704 and 1717. These translations exerted a huge influence on subsequent European literature and attitudes to the Islamic world. Those tales painted an abstract imaginative image of the city, and in contrast, traveller's observations depicted the contemporary image of the city at the time of their visit, yet the real meaning of the city remained unidentified. This book influenced the travellers' perspectives about Baghdad, and it was extremely sought after by all travellers. For instance, when the English traveller Buckingham visited Baghdad a century later, in 1816, he offered a large amount of money to buy a copy of this book, but was disappointed when he realised that it was difficult to obtain. Hence, he wrote that the literary scene was lifeless in Baghdad, because it was difficult for him to obtain original books and manuscripts⁹⁸.

In contrast to Claudius Rich's gloomy visions of Baghdad, the letters of his wife, Mary Rich, revealed good impressions about their time in Baghdad. Mary depicts their huge luxurious house in Baghdad where the family lived, and which also contained the Residency offices. She portrayed the house as:

A large and handsome house perfectly in the Turkish style ... It consists of three different courts, one of which belongs to me ... and it is the most comfortable,

⁹⁶ This century witnessed thriving aspirations for learning, and consequently translation was increasingly encouraged to advance knowledge in many subjects.

⁹⁷ Said, *Beginnings*, p. 302.

⁹⁸ Al-Warrak, *Baghdad bi-aqlam rahhalah*, p. 145.

retired part of the house. I have one large, handsome sitting room which we have made the library and breakfast parlour, and where I always sit and receive my great visits. There are no less than six other small, comfortable rooms, with a fine, large open gallery all around an open courtyard. These apartments are perfectly separate from other parts of the house, which I never visit till the evening, when business is over⁹⁹.

Mary provided a fine description of the house they lived in. She points out a lovely picture of the courtyard house style, which was the only housing style employed in Baghdad for centuries (Figure 38). Mary described this style inaccurately as ‘Turkish’, since it resembles other housing styles in the Ottoman Empire. The association of this style with Turkish style reflects a superficial temporary perception, which is based on momentary views rather than historical assessments. The unity and similarity in building styles between Baghdad and the adjacent cities, is a result of their common history, and the easy movement between these cities. However, it has been proven previously in this thesis that the courtyard house style originated with the Sumerians in Ur south Baghdad, more than three thousand years ago¹⁰⁰.



Figure 38: Interior court of the British Residency [Jones 1998]

Mary expressed her feeling of comfort and leisure in that house. The completely private space opens those houses to the inside rather to the outside. The flexibility of design and possibility of full separation between its parts, indicate great architectural sustainability that responds to people's requirements. Nevertheless, the courtyard housing style was not described by other travellers in the same manner, which suggests that their perception of that space depended on their individual experience and the specific weather at the time of their stay. For instance, the German traveller Carsten Niebuhr noted that the small square courtyard, which is surrounded by high walls, acts like an oven that increases the heat inside the house in summer. He states that for this reason it was necessary for every building to have

⁹⁹ Alexander, *Baghdad in bygone days*, p. 33.

¹⁰⁰ Although the courtyard house style has ancient origins in the Baghdadi region, it is connected to people's norms rather than a specific locale. With the emergence of Islamic laws that encouraged women's privacy, this style was maintained and developed further.

a lower underground room, or *sirdab*¹⁰¹. In fact, studies of these courtyard houses have proved that they introduced brilliant architectural solutions to solve diverse climatic conditions using available materials and equipment¹⁰².

Apart from the luxurious house, Mary expresses delight in the quality and variety of fruit in Baghdad. She writes:

We enjoy a great deal of fruit; peaches, nectarine, apricots, apples, plums, and mulberries¹⁰³

This statement indicates the positive conditions of both agriculture and trade in Baghdad at that time, as some fruits not usually grown in Baghdad area were still sold there. However, Mary's reflection on the overall image of Baghdad was negative. She notes

The view I have of the renowned city is not the most beautiful. The streets are extremely narrow and the whole town is built of sun-baked bricks which gives it a very dirty appearance. There is nothing at all splendid in Baghdad, and the *pasha* keeps up very little state¹⁰⁴

Mary's expression of the outward appearance of Baghdad was different to her contented expressions about the interior of their house. The narrow streets and the dull exterior of the city reflected in Mary's letter are the result of different political and natural causes throughout the history of Baghdad. Equally, the interiors of the buildings maintained their highly appealing characteristics, since they were less exposed to these fluctuating conditions. In addition to political and natural causes, Mary mentions another reason for the lack of city maintenance; she notes the governor of Baghdad did not improve the situation. This points to the dissatisfaction with the governor of Baghdad, and relates to predetermined impressions. Although the governors of Baghdad did not demonstrate full intent to redevelop the city, the literary and poetic representations in chapter five verified a number of development projects in the same period, which suggests some exaggeration of the poor physical condition of the city.

Also in this statement, Mary suggested that the buildings in Baghdad were constructed with sun-dried bricks, while other travellers, such as Buckingham implied that the bricks are baked and not sun-dried¹⁰⁵. These different views reveal Mary's unfamiliarity with the place, which was reflected in inaccurate observations. For Mary, the gloomy exterior picture of the city contradicted the brilliant image, which was outlined in *The thousand and one nights*. This comparison between a superficial temporary image and imaginative exaggerated image caused much misunderstanding and misinterpretation of the urban history of Baghdad, which emphasises the need for the alternative method that uses the vertical interpretation of the historical accounts to attain more understanding of history¹⁰⁶.

¹⁰¹ Al-Warrak, *Baghdad bi-aqlam rahhalah*, p. 12.

¹⁰² Bianca, *Urban form in the Arab world*, p. 66.

¹⁰³ Alexander, *Baghdad in bygone days*, p. 35.

¹⁰⁴ Alexander, *Baghdad in bygone days*, p. 34.

¹⁰⁵ The observations of Buckingham are examined in the next section.

¹⁰⁶ For more about the vertical interpretation of texts see page 95 in this thesis.

6.3.4 Receptive Descriptions of James Silk Buckingham

The English traveller James Silk Buckingham is among the travellers who visited Baghdad in the early decades of the nineteenth century. He was born in Falmouth, England, in 1787¹⁰⁷ and received limited education when he was young. However, historians recognise him as a prolific author and as “an observant and entertaining writer”¹⁰⁸. Buckingham travelled in Europe, America and the East, and wrote many travel books, as well as many pamphlets on political and social subjects. Before visiting Baghdad, he passed through other cities in the region such as Cairo, Aleppo, Damascus and Urfa. Hence, his perspective of Baghdad’s architectural styles was placed in comparison to those cities. Sadly this comparison often ranked Baghdad behind, as its unpleasant physical image reflected its prolonged position as a frontier of political conflicts.

Buckingham’s remarks on Baghdad provided reflective descriptions of the city, and portrayed its components thoroughly, which makes them significant to the historiographical studies of Baghdad in the early nineteenth century. He incorporated his observations about Baghdad into three chapters of his travel book *‘Travels in Mesopotamia’*. Buckingham arrived in Baghdad on 20 July 1816¹⁰⁹, and he stayed in the house of the British Resident Claudius Rich. Before entering Baghdad, Buckingham experienced problems with the customs at the gate of Baghdad, and he was detained for some hours¹¹⁰. When he arrived at Rich’s house, he was very pleased with “so much comfort, and, indeed luxury”¹¹¹. He describes the rooms and courtyards of the house, and noted that this residence “is certainly one of the largest, best and more commodious in the city”¹¹². This agreeable situation delayed his task of exploring the city. He wrote:

I continued to enjoy these pleasures uninterruptedly for several days, before I felt even a desire to gratify that curiosity which is so generally impatient on entering a large and celebrated city¹¹³

These comments show the unique characteristics of the courtyard houses of Baghdad, which were spacious, luxurious and comfortable. However, this was Buckingham’s only experience with these houses, since he had no access to any other house in Baghdad. He notes; “of the private houses of Baghdad I saw but little, excepting only their exterior walls and terraces”¹¹⁴. Despite the lack of observations of interior spaces in Buckingham’s writing, his description of the city from outside is useful for this study, since it highlights the city’s physical character at that time. Buckingham stated that Baghdad “stands on a level plain, on the north-east bank of the Tigris, having one of its sides close to the water’s edge”¹¹⁵. Although he mentions both sides of the city, he refers to the eastern side as Baghdad. These remarks are similar to Olivier’s statements, which were discussed in a previous section. This view of the superiority of eastern Baghdad shows the great focus of these travellers on official and political sites, which were concentrated in the eastern side, and constituted the largest part of the city at that

¹⁰⁷ Al-Warrak, *Baghdad bi-aqlam rahhalah*, p. 102.

¹⁰⁸ Coke, R 1927, *Baghdad, the city of peace*, 1 vols., Thornton Butterworth Ltd., London, p. 239.

¹⁰⁹ Al-Warrak, *Baghdad bi-aqlam rahhalah*, p. 102.

¹¹⁰ Coke, *Baghdad, the city of peace*, p. 239.

¹¹¹ Buckingham, *Travels in Mesopotamia*, pp. 370, 371.

¹¹² Coke, *Baghdad, the city of peace*, p. 240.

¹¹³ Buckingham, *Travels in Mesopotamia*, p.371.

¹¹⁴ Buckingham, *Travels in Mesopotamia*, p. 380.

¹¹⁵ Buckingham, *Travels in Mesopotamia*, p. 372.

time¹¹⁶. However, Buckingham illustrated the western side as having the “same long continued line of streets and *bazaars*”¹¹⁷. He also points out a hospital on that side, which indicates its apparent growth during that period, yet the travellers still viewed it as secondary, compared with the eastern side.

Buckingham described the wall of Baghdad and its gates. He noted that the wall which surrounded Baghdad, and which was built entirely from brick “bears marks of having been constructed and repaired at many different periods”¹¹⁸. Although the wall looked fragile, Buckingham stated that Baghdad successfully resisted the Persians’ attempts against it, and it was equally secure against the Wahhabis¹¹⁹. He states the old parts of the wall are more appealing than the new parts¹²⁰. I think the reason for the decrease in the architectural qualities is linked to the effects of recurrent conflicts and natural disasters, which forced people to quickly rebuild the damaged parts of the wall, without paying attention to fine architectural details. Buckingham pointed out the towers in the walls, some of which contained magnificent brick work, and long strips of Arabic calligraphy on the top. He refers to Neibuhr’s proposition that the calligraphy belong to the Abbasid period in 1221/618¹²¹.

Buckingham notes there were three gates along the wall of Baghdad. The first gate was at the south eastern side of the city, the second gate was at the north eastern side, and the third gate, which is the chief gate, was at the north western side¹²². Buckingham did not indicate the fourth gate, which is *Bab Al-Tillism* (Talisman Gate), because it had been bricked up since the time of *sultan* Murad in 1638¹²³. Also he did not mention the fifth gate at the end of the bridge, which was called *Bab Al-Jisr* (the bridge gate). This confirms the removal of the wall from the river’s side. However, considering the north-western gate as the main gate indicates the city was accessible from the land more than from the river, which suggests a decrease in the use of ships as a means of travelling during that period.

In relation to the vegetation, Buckingham pointed out a big part of the eastern side of Baghdad - especially north eastern parts - was not occupied. He also remarked that even the inhabited parts by the river were full of trees, as if the city was built inside a forest¹²⁴. The large uninhabited area inside the city walls is evidence of inconsistent population growth due to changing circumstances. However, historians suggest that there was a constant increase in population in the second half of the nineteenth century¹²⁵, which signifies some improvement in the city’s conditions.

The beauty of the surroundings of the Tigris River was one of the attractive views for Buckingham. He states that the most impressive view that made him happy and relieved was

¹¹⁶ As discussed previously, the western part or Karkh has always been inhabited through different stages of the city’s history, and it has been one of the basic components of the city, yet it was smaller than the eastern side.

¹¹⁷ Buckingham, *Travels in Mesopotamia*, p. 395.

¹¹⁸ Buckingham, *Travels in Mesopotamia*, p. 372.

¹¹⁹ Buckingham, *Travels in Mesopotamia*, p. 383.

¹²⁰ Al-Warrak, *Baghdad bi-aqlam rahhalah*, pp. 103, 109.

¹²¹ See Al-Warrak, *Baghdad bi-aqlam rahhalah*, p. 104. Also see Coke, *Baghdad, the city of peace*, p. 241.

¹²² Al-Warrak, *Baghdad bi-aqlam rahhalah*, pp. 103, 104.

¹²³ Coke, *Baghdad, the city of peace*, p. 241.

¹²⁴ Al-Warrak, *Baghdad bi-aqlam rahhalah*, p. 105.

¹²⁵ Issawi, CP 1980, *The economic history of Turkey, 1800-1914*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, p. 17.

the view of the two sides of the city as he stood in the middle of the boat bridge¹²⁶, where the dawn breeze was so quiet, and nothing could muddle its purity. The river flowed in grandness and splendour, and the sky with its glorious stars was reflected on the water surface¹²⁷. This image is comparable to the lovely images that are reflected in the literature and poetry of the Baghdadis, which indicates the positive influence of the river's environment on both residents and the visitors. However, Buckingham is among the few travellers who conveyed this positive image in their writings, which demonstrates the effects of individual experience and writing technique on the perception of place. This confirms the inadequacy of using a single source in historiography, and asserts the efficiency of the alternative method that combines all sources to reach a better understanding of history.

Another appealing image of Baghdad in Buckingham's writing is the pleasant atmosphere during the nights of *Ramadhan* - the month of fasting - when the main activities and celebrations usually take place at night. He states that during one of these nights, while he was on the bridge, he could hear cheerful sounds from both sides of the river, which were well lit as far as the eye could see¹²⁸. He notes:

The large coffee house near the *Medrassee el Mostanser*, or College of the Learned, so often mentioned in the Arabian story, presented one blaze of light on the eastern side. The still larger one, opposite to this, illuminated by its lamps the whole western bank; and as these edifices were both facing the separate extremities of the bridge of boats, a stream of light extended from each, completely across it, even to the centre of the stream¹²⁹.

This fascinating picture of the intertwining arrays of lights from both sides of the river, and their beautiful reflection on the river's surface, describes both the wonderful river environment and the two parts of Baghdad. According to these texts, the physical beauty of this environment was undoubtedly impressive. However, it was the integration between this beauty and the social and spiritual beauties of the *Ramadhan* evenings, as described by Buckingham that resulted in this happy atmosphere. These remarks generally indicate a happier atmosphere in the early nineteenth century, compared with the late eighteenth century, which suggests the direct impact of the decrease in epidemics and conflicts on the condition of the city. Also in his statement, Buckingham used *The Arabian Nights* tales as a reference and a guide for understanding the city's spaces. This affirms the strong influence of these tales - which combine truth and imagination - on the interpretations and writings of these travellers.

Unlike the pleasing effect of the exterior of Baghdad, the interior of the city didn't appeal to Buckingham, with its less interesting objects¹³⁰. This reflects the influence of the tales of *The Arabian Nights* on his imagination, since they paint a picture of unparalleled grandeur and splendour. In relation to the building materials, Buckingham notes; "all the buildings, both public and private, are constructed of furnace-burnt bricks, of a yellowish red colour"¹³¹. He

¹²⁶ He estimates the bridge of boats to be "little or more than six hundred feet in length". He was surprised that although the bridge seemed to be weak, the ropes and chains held it so well together. See Buckingham, *Travels in Mesopotamia*, p. 394.

¹²⁷ Al-Warrak, *Baghdad bi-aqlam rahhalah*, pp. 137, 138.

¹²⁸ Al-Warrak, *Baghdad bi-aqlam rahhalah*, p. 138.

¹²⁹ Buckingham, *Travels in Mesopotamia*, p. 515. Also see Al-Warrak, *Baghdad bi-aqlam rahhalah*, p. 137.

¹³⁰ Buckingham, *Travels in Mesopotamia*, p. 373.

¹³¹ Buckingham, *Travels in Mesopotamia*, p. 372.

¹³¹ Al-Warrak, *Baghdad bi-aqlam rahhalah*, p. 373.

applies that the bricks are usually small, and have rounded edges instead of sharp angles, which indicates the recurrent use of the bricks taken from the ruins. Buckingham suggests that the use of new bricks is uncommon, and if used they would be noticeable¹³². The practice of constructing buildings with used bricks indicates the large amount of ruins that resulted from various disasters¹³³.

The travelogues of Buckingham are more focused on the overall image of Baghdad, and on public places, since he did not have access to its private houses. He portrays the streets as “narrow and unpaved”¹³⁴, lined with high walls that have no openings on the ground floor level. He also notes that the street network is complicated, and the streets are more winding than any other big city in the Ottoman Empire¹³⁵. While many lanes between houses were narrow (Figure 39), this tightness helped to cool the place and reduced excessive heat in summer. In addition, their extra bends increased delight and visual interest and reduced monotonous views¹³⁶.

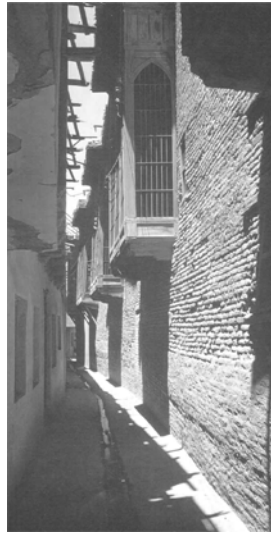


Figure 39: Narrow lanes between old Baghdad houses [Warren & Fethi 1982]

In contrast to his impression of the narrow lanes, Buckingham expresses a positive feeling about the markets. He notes that they were numerous, and mostly formed of long, straight, and reasonably wide avenues. He states that some of them belong to the fourteenth century, and they are well furnished with Indian commodities¹³⁷. Unlike other travellers who usually write a brief description about the markets, Buckingham carefully described all the features of the market, including the roofing details:

¹³² Al-Warrak, *Baghdad bi-aqlam rahhalah*, p. 105.

¹³³ Another reason for the avoidance of the use of new bricks was to prevent attracting officials and burglars. Refer to Chapter Three of this thesis for details.

¹³⁴ Buckingham, *Travels in Mesopotamia*, p. 374.

¹³⁵ Al-Warrak, *Baghdad bi-aqlam rahhalah*, p. 105.

¹³⁶ Conventional historical accounts about Islamic cities, such as Cairo, Istanbul, Damascus and Fez, often describe the street layout in these cities in relation to the urban morphology of the Islamic city and issues of modernisation which imply wider streets. However, the sources that address this issue in Baghdad are very few.

¹³⁷ See Buckingham, *Travels in Mesopotamia*, pp. 376, 379. Also see Al-Warrak, *Baghdad bi-aqlam rahhalah*, pp. 111, 112.

The best of these are vaulted over with brick-work, but the greater numbers are merely covered by flat beams, laid across from side to side to support a roof of straw, dried leaves, or branches of trees and grass¹³⁸

These details provide an understanding of the physical components of the markets, which supports the importance of travelogues in historiography. In addition to roofing, Buckingham observed something in Baghdad's markets, which he signifies as "a peculiarity which I had never seen elsewhere"¹³⁹. He describes it as:

A band of Arabic inscriptions over each shop-bench, sculptured in large characters, and with as much care as any of the inscriptions on the mosque. These were executed with so much regularity and uniformity, as to induce a belief of their being coeval with the *bazaar* itself, which was very old¹⁴⁰

These remarks show the permanency and long existence of these markets, and their resistance to destruction. In addition, they show the adherence of people to the teachings of the Qur'an, and the desire to immerse these teachings in their daily activities, which shows the importance of the language and the Qur'an for reading places and their histories. They also point to the importance of inscriptions that are applied to monuments as well as everyday spaces. However, the 'old' look of the markets conveys the modest maintenance of the markets, compared to the mosques.

Unlike the market, the renovated mosques carried the names of the *wali*, and this explains the political attitudes and circumstances at that time. The Arabic inscriptions, which were also observed by Niebuhr, held different meanings. Normally, these writings above the mosques' entrances hold verses from the Qur'an, in addition to a poem that documents the date of the construction of that mosque, and the name of the governor at the time of construction or renovation¹⁴¹. Yet individual shops held only verses of the Qur'an, in order to obtain blessing and protection. Buckingham expresses another condition of the markets of Baghdad, which caused mixed feelings of surprise and pleasure. He visited Baghdad during the holy month of *Ramadhan*, and in the warmest time of the year (August). He was surprised to see little activity in the markets during the day, yet these markets were very crowded and full of lights during those nights.

The *bazaars*, which were mostly deserted during the day, thronged at night by multitude of idlers, all arrayed in their best apparel ... the peculiar gloom, which regained throughout these dark brick vaulted passages during the morning, was now removed by a profusion of lamps and torches, with which every shop, and bench, and coffee shed was illuminated and all was life and gaiety¹⁴².

These remarks reflect dual images of the same urban component of the city. While the markets were unappealing during the day, they were full of joy and happiness during nights. In addition to the market, Buckingham particularly portrayed the coffee shops, which indicates the increasing of social effectiveness of these places. Furthermore, he points out the

¹³⁸ Buckingham, *Travels in Mesopotamia*, p. 379.

¹³⁹ Buckingham, *Travels in Mesopotamia*, p. 376.

¹⁴⁰ Buckingham, *Travels in Mesopotamia*, p. 376.

¹⁴¹ See examples of these writings in the analysis of the poetry of Al-Tamimi, in Chapter Five.

¹⁴² Buckingham, *Travels in Mesopotamia*, pp. 513, 514.

main open public space, or *Maydan* as a busy place that “never failed to be crowded every night with people of all classes”¹⁴³. These observations assert the importance of integrating all dimensions of beauty to obtain a complete understanding of the beauty of place. Although Buckingham was not familiar with these conditions, he enjoyed the illuminated places at nights, and he included these observations in his writing. Because his task was merely to record what he sees, he wrote his comments without further investigation or interpretation, which shows the crucial impact of the writer’s objectives on his writing of history.

Buckingham also wrote about the architectural styles and designs of some of the great mosques on the Tigris by the bridge and a number of coffee houses on each side. These mosques include *Jami’ Suq Al-Ghazl*, *Jami’ Al-Khasaki*, *Jami’ Al-Wazer*, *Jami’ Al-Maydan* and *Jami’ Mirjan*¹⁴⁴. He noted that some of these mosques had “a fine appearance from without”¹⁴⁵. He showed an appreciation of certain parts of these mosques, such as their entrances and minarets. He estimates the number of mosques as more than a hundred, yet of these, he estimates thirty mosques that can be distinguished by their particular minarets; “the rest are probably mere chapels, oratories, tombs, and venerated places, restored by the populace for prayer”¹⁴⁶. Buckingham observes the domes to be high and narrow, with a height that is double the radius. He notes that the reflections of the white and green glazed tiles covering the domes’ bases evoke pleasure and comfort rather than grandness and splendour¹⁴⁷.

Unlike the huge amount of symbolic references and multiple interpretations of mosques and domes, expressed by the Baghdadi scholars, the interpretation of these forms in the traveller’s view was once again limited to visual appearance and its relationship to other cities in the region. In addition, Buckingham’s views were always connected to the *Arabian Nights*; which limited his understanding of things to a particular period and certain conditions. For example, he illustrates the government offices, or *saray* as “an extensive rather than a grand building”¹⁴⁸. These singular methods in interpretation impose specific limits to the understanding of urban history. Conversely, the wider scope of the alternative method that is open to all resources allows more understanding of the events of the past.

Nevertheless, Buckingham’s observations are significant to the historiography of Baghdad, since they provide a thorough depiction of the life of the city and its urban components¹⁴⁹. In addition, his designation of the changing social conditions of the city during *Ramadhan* are unique to the understanding of the city, since perhaps no traveller has experienced this situation and recorded it in his travelogue. The sudden change of the atmosphere of the market during the day, before and during *Ramadhan*, was an unexpected situation for him. Yet this case emphasises the law of continuous historical change, which is a normal occurrence that affects the interpretation of place. This implies that judgements should always be flexible, in order to contain all the changeable elements of history, and that this temporality of everyday events resists the fixed images provided by conventional histories.

¹⁴³ Buckingham, *Travels in Mesopotamia*, p. 513.

¹⁴⁴ Buckingham, *Travels in Mesopotamia*, pp. 378, 512.

¹⁴⁵ Buckingham, *Travels in Mesopotamia*, p. 513.

¹⁴⁶ Buckingham, *Travels in Mesopotamia*, p. 378.

¹⁴⁷ Al-Warrak, *Baghdad bi-aqlam rahhalah*, p. 110.

¹⁴⁸ Buckingham, *Travels in Mesopotamia*, p. 374.

¹⁴⁹ Buckingham variously estimated the population of Baghdad from fifty to a hundred thousand, and he suggested that probably eighty thousand is a more reasonable number. He also brings out a depiction of the different kinds of people and their religion, in addition to a description of the special clothes of each category. See Al-Warrak, *Baghdad bi-aqlam rahhalah*, p. 113. Also see Buckingham, *Travels in Mesopotamia*, p. 380.

The overall image of the city that is stated in Buckingham's and Rich's writings indicates a gloomy visual appearance in the early decades of the nineteenth century. Yet they also reflected a slight improvement in appearance and a happier atmosphere compared with the late eighteenth century travelogues. This asserts the need for a deeper reading of this kind of writing.

6.4 The Travelogues and the Suggested Method in Historiography

The study of the travelogues of Baghdad in this chapter was aimed at an awareness of their methods of interpretation, in order to evaluate their appropriateness as one dimension of the alternative method in historiography. This method proposed utilising literature and poetry by Baghdadi scholars, in addition to travelogues, in the representation of the urban history of Baghdad. The study of the travelogues of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century mainly examined the travel writings of four travellers who wrote about their visit to Baghdad in this period. The diverse backgrounds and writing practices of these travellers resulted in a variety of interpretations that could enrich the study of the urban history of Baghdad.

Although Niebuhr was primarily a surveyor, he expressed interest in the history of Baghdad, and he also wrote about the urban forms of the city at the time of his visit in 1766. Similarly, the French traveller Olivier was an entomologist, but he expanded his writings to encompass architectural and urban details of Baghdad at the time of his visit in 1791, in addition to other historical accounts of the city. The detailed maps of Niebuhr, and the natural and environmental information of Olivier, contributed to the writing of the history of Baghdad in the late decades of the eighteenth century. The travellers of the early nineteenth century also wrote significant accounts about the conditions of Baghdad during that period. As Rich was involved in a political position, he expressed little information about the architectural and urban elements of Baghdad. Yet the letters of his wife, Mary, included significant observations of the city between 1808 and 1821. In addition, Buckingham, who visited Baghdad in 1816, provided elaborate descriptions of the urban and architectural forms of Baghdad at the time of his visit.

Despite the slight differences between the intentions and backgrounds of these writers, they reflected parallel impressions of the city. Generally, the methods of the European travel writings about Baghdad in that period involved detailed and accurate descriptions of the city characteristics, its architecture, trade, history and people. Unlike the travellers of the preceding era, whose aims were confined to discovery and to enhancing knowledge and the writing of history, these travellers were keen to obtain specific information about the places they visited. This information includes geographical, environmental and historical evidence. Although some traveller's remarks depicted a positive atmosphere, they did not reflect on the social and soulful beauty of the place. These writings often rejected rather than accepted the norms of the society. These attitudes made the travelogues a favourite body of literature that promotes the Orientalists' method of a plain appreciation of the 'Orient'.

The travelogues of this period implemented a mere appreciation of the glory of the East. Accordingly, travellers' writings became plain descriptions of cities, and they were emptied from any other meaning beyond their specific objectives and colonial determinations for authority. Although each traveller had a different speciality and skill, all of them were attracted to the glorious pictures of the partially imaginative tales of *The Arabian Nights*,

which were set about ten centuries prior to their visit to Baghdad. This points to the power of fiction that affects historical imagination and therefore history writing. This fictional understanding can be considered a positive issue to some extent, as it provides alternative understanding of the place that would otherwise be not available. However, the traveller's devotion to history writing opened the door to much misinterpretation and invention later. Lewis notes; "probably the outstanding example in our time of the inventive and purposive use of historiography is the writing of colonial, post-colonial, and finally pre-colonial history"¹⁵⁰.

The presentation of these travelogues in this chapter confirmed that they comprise crucial information about the urban history of Baghdad, which needs to be examined systematically to reveal additional meanings. The inclusion of this type of literature among the valued resources in historiography is one of the aims of the alternative method that does not exclude any evidence from the representation process. Nevertheless, they should be studied in conjunction with all other resources, to enhance the understanding of the history of Baghdad.

¹⁵⁰ Lewis, *History: remembered, recovered, invented*, p. 87.

7. Summary of the Research Outcomes: Evaluating the Alternative Method

This chapter examines the outcomes of the applications of the alternative method for the socio-urban history of Baghdad as suggested in this thesis, towards a critical analysis of its validity as a method in historiography. The thesis examined literary material, including poetry, historical narratives and travelogues, in order to validate the hypothesis that these texts are powerful historical tools in representing place. In order to attain an integrated interpretation of history, the study proposed the analysis of poetry and historical narratives written by Baghdadi scholars as a screening tool from the inside, whilst anticipating travel writings as exemplifiers of reflections from the outside.

The thesis focused mainly on texts that were written in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Historical accounts of this period are contradictory, which makes it crucial to investigate the writings of this period. The historical texts before the eighteenth century were also examined to attain a more contextualised approach that increases the understanding of Baghdad's history.

This chapter makes two comparative analyses; first it combines the two sources, poetry and travelogues, as representatives of the new method, and compares the outcomes of their interpretation with conventional historical interpretations. Second, it compares the outcomes between poetry and travelogues to allow a deeper understanding of these two synchronic textual historical sources. The evaluative approach in this chapter outlines the meaning of conventional historiography in this thesis, and then the chapter examines the alternative method's outcomes in relation to both poetry and travelogues.

7.1 Conventional Methods and the Research Question

This research initiated a number of questions regarding the historiography of Baghdad, including reasons for the partial interpretation of its history. In addition, it investigated the conditions of writing on specific urban aspects that require a different approach or attitude to historiography. The key focus of this thesis is the historiography of Baghdad in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The history of Iraq has, in general, been written on the basis of official British records, for the simple reason that non-official sources are neither as plentiful nor as easily accessible. The common problem of current methods in historiography is the single-sided approach, where the theory embraces a single method of interpretation, and attempts to accommodate all its outcomes within this particular direction. The result is often a partial interpretation that lacks adequate consideration of many other aspects of the historical experience.

The problem remains in finding other sources that satisfy a diverse systematic approach to historiography. Generally, historiography is classified into three types; the first is classical or pre-modern historiography, which deals with historical issues before the Enlightenment. The second is Eurocentric or empirical historiography, which deals with the history of modernity. The third category is contemporary world historiography, or what historians call post-modern historiography, which deals with present historiographical issues. This thesis deals with these three types of historiography as one unit, as they are essentially interrelated.

This study refers to the current historiography of Baghdad as conventional historiography. The investigation of the conventional historiography of Baghdad emphasised the lack of an integrated interpretation of the history of Baghdad, which resulted in a representation that does not reflect the unique case of Baghdad. This situation addresses the general dilemma of historiography today, which “has an attitude problem”¹. These attitudes have been classified - in Chapter Three - into four main categories; heroic or personal interpretation, mythical or imaginative writings, material interpretation, and political schemes. While heroic interpretations focus solely on famous individuals in history, mythical interpretations implement a legend and extend its scope to the history of the city. On the other hand, material interpretations highlight key architectural figures and monumental buildings that occupy less than 2% of the built environment². Lastly colonial interpretations allow political measures to dominate visions of architectural histories.

These methods present predetermined judgements based partially on casual observations seeking to prove these judgements, which necessitates an investigation of the factors that led to the absence of important historical facts in these writings. Conventional historiographical methods situate Ottoman studies within administrative and political accounts rather than social histories. In addition, these methods analyse the construction of identity and power by integrating categories of difference, such as class, religion and ethnicity. With regards to architecture and urbanism, these methods use specific terminology that accentuates the grandness of the architecture of this period in a passive way, which confines their meanings to the past. The specific terminology reinforces categories of class, religion and ethnicity, while the suggested method in this thesis looks at alternative textual sources that provide a more humanist definition of these categories.

Conventional methods established strong links between the identity of place and culture. This term introduced many inconsistent ideas to the field of historiography. Cultural studies were introduced to present culture as a social construction. As a result, proposals for utilising formal and spatial qualities to measure architectural excellence at any period of a culture's development gained a central position and acceptance in cultural studies. However, since culture was constantly associated with the past, the gap between the modern and the traditional did not allow a positive exchange and interaction, and the idea that science is the opponent to history and culture continued to extend and prevail³.

In order to promote literary approaches to cultural studies, the subjective perspective by Gadamer and others endorsed the methodologies of cultural history and privileged it over cultural studies. Instead of focusing on material and spatial analyses that shaped cultural studies, the study of literature (in cultural history studies) emerged as an alternative textual representation to conceptualise truth in history. This work produced a new attitude in

¹ Soder, 'The return of cultural history', pp. 73-84.

² Nasar, *The evaluative image of the city*, p. 21.

³ The analyses of poetry in this thesis proved how science and the humanities co-exist in Islamic philosophy.

historiography; literary historiography, which is “a historiography of the import of the creative act within the writing of history”⁴. This attitude is often criticised for its lack of quantitative measures and the use of statistics. In addition, some scholars suggest the recollection of previous information implies that the social order will be “transmitted backward instead of forward, by inheritance not achievement”⁵.

These arguments presented a philosophical split between subjective and objective approaches. However, the discussion of these approaches in Chapter Two of this thesis proved that both subjective and scientific approaches share parallel views of the past, by diminishing its continuity while getting benefit from it. The alternative method was introduced to add to the objectives of current methods and to enhance connections between different periods of history. The method emphasises the strong intellectual connections between scientific and historical narratives, where each cannot be explained without the other. The outcomes of this method are discussed in the next section.

7.2 Evaluating the Alternative Method

The idea of ‘another way’ of interpreting historical texts requires a deep analytical approach. This search adapted a comprehensive approach to existing theories of interpretation, in relation to the period under study, in order to develop a challenging and multidisciplinary analysis. The alternative method in historiography suggested in this thesis was shaped through establishing links between the four fields of history; science, humanism and the spiritual and divine. The new method does not limit its search for truthful history to a single kind of representation; it rather extends the search to potential disciplines regardless of their connection to science and human sciences. This method does not favour literary historiography over scientific historiography, preventing the creation of barriers to a lucid understanding of history.

The identification of a separation of scientific and humanistic approaches generates more isolation between disciplines. The alternative method highlights the historic links between the humanities and physical sciences. In reality, objective and subjective thinking share interlocking criteria. Scientific experiments usually initiate hypotheses, which are, in essence, propositions inspired by imagination, and imagination is considered part of the humanist approach. Indeed, the faculty of imagination comprises both tangible and intangible qualities, and there is no form of imagination which is not shared by art and science, but “the real difference is in the kind of control which they exert over their imagining”⁶. Therefore, the attitude of interpreting things impacts on how they are interpreted rather than their reality. For instance, philosophy may not always require a scientific sense of experience, and the philosophical contents of a scientific experiment do not necessarily change according to the results of that experiment. However, this change does not affect the strong links between philosophy and science.

To affirm these links, the alternative method embraced the interpretation of literary resources to complement the prevailing material historiography, and to establish a balance between those resources. The new method embraced the phenomenon of ‘urban literature’ as a representative of successful interconnection between art and science. The multivalent nature

⁴ Soder, ‘The return of cultural history’, pp. 73-84.

⁵ Fuller, *The new sociological imagination*, p. 133.

⁶ Passmore, *Art, science and imagination*, p.15.

of literature enables multiple interpretations. Thus, literature in this context is intended to be a collective ground for both objective and subjective interpretations. Indications of architectural and urban components of the city noted in literature assert the association between art and science in literature, since architecture holds both scientific and artistic dimensions. The more this literature is investigated according to this method, the more ideas that encompass multiple directions and thoughts will be unveiled.

However, the focus of some interpretative methods on linguistic outcomes offers a sense that literature shares more with art than with science, which limits the interpretation of history. In addition, although, over time, methods of representation have changed, allowing more openness to a wide range of disciplines, this openness seems to be restricted rather than inclusive. The implementation of urban literature is particularly significant to the representation of the late eighteenth and the early nineteenth centuries, given that pictorial images of this period are limited. This kind of interpretation assists in reconstructing the image of the city, and the responses to various questions about the meaning of the past.

Another important scope of the interpretation of urban literature in this method is that it helps to understand the past by articulating issues related to social sciences, which are becoming a means of assessment of the culture of our time. The alternative method integrates social and friendship aspects with other important components of the historical experience, such as the spiritual and physical dimensions. In literature, the physical dimension was present in the mind of the writer, who reflects it in a generally abstracted form. The immeasurable portrayal of forms in literature allows the essences of these forms to exist in our imaginative faculty. In other words, the analyses of poetry and narratives represent urban forms in the intellectual faculty of the interpreter. This representation contributes to the discovery of conceptual knowledge that utilises a positive interaction between time and space, and consequently prevents tracing recurrent architectural elements in new compositions⁷.

The combination of architecture and literature, for some historians, might present the 'rootedness of difference'⁸. However, the method of interpretation dictates the outcomes of this combined representation. The idea of 'difference' is understood conventionally as a reflection of the variety of races, religions and intellects. Whereas difference is also a powerful historical theme that contributes to the advancement of historical understanding, since it allows for more variety, assessment and competition. In order to attain better outcomes, the new method implemented three key principles; advancement, balance and complete vision. The method considered these principles as important measures to validate the interpretation procedure. These principles encompass a number of objectives that promote unity and similarity rather than difference. These objectives include the continuous progress of society, stability in dealing with complex issues, avoiding converting specific goals to absolute goals and reflection on all aspects of the historical experience.

Another issue that is associated with the representation of literature is the possession of the intellectual property of the represented texts. Historians, such as Cooperson, propose the view that the represented literature is owned by the presenter instead of the author, who lacks a 'conscious reflection'⁹ at the time of writing. In addition, the presented literature was

⁷ Examples of this tracing include adding particular forms such as domes and pointed arches to new designs to give them an identity of Islamic architecture without any attention to meaning. See Chapter One for more details.

⁸ Akkach, 'On culture', p. 186.

⁹ Cooperson, 'Baghdad in rhetoric and narrative', pp. 99-113.

considered as a world literature that 'belongs to the world'¹⁰. The limiting of the presented texts to the presenter introduces double articulation of meaning, where literature is simultaneously the ground on which general analysis proceeds, and at the same time it is an object of invention and mediation in the writing of history, which brings more confusion to the understanding of history.

However, these works may be associated with a global literature from another perspective. The analyses of the poetry and narratives of Baghdadi scholars in the previous chapters revealed expressions and meanings parallel to other global literary expressions, including suffering, passion, love, grief and happiness. The examination of these texts showed that although they were created by individual writers, their common visions of specific matters reflected their nation's consciousness. Thus, the representation in these texts encompassed an interpretation of combined local and global meaning, with no precedence of either interpretation over the other. Whilst local and social bounds dictated the mode of writing and directed the ideas of the writer, global meanings were represented through the relationships between these ideas. The new method implemented this approach of establishing relationships between local and global properties through their interpretation, while maintaining the possession of meaning with the writer. In order to elaborate these issues, the outcomes of the representations of poetry, narratives and travelogues are discussed and compared in the next two sections.

7.3 The Representation of Poetry and Narratives

The analysis of the poetry and historical narratives of Baghdadi scholars that took place in this thesis was intended to construct a systematic classification of historiographical methods, and to characterise the different levels at which a historical account unfolds. In this context, the representations of poetry and narratives were not viewed as merely neutral discursive forms that may or may not represent actual historical events; they were rather viewed as certain bearers of knowledge, and as powerful mediators, which enable one to recognise numerous ideas and meanings. Although an enormous amount of literature was composed in Baghdad in various periods to present occasional events, the textual representation proved that significant historical meanings are embedded in these writings, entailing a deeper understanding of them to extract their implications.

The poems examined in this thesis represented an advanced capacity for the linguistic arts to exhibit an effective balance between the external appearance of words and their meanings. These words provide a factual account of the atmosphere of the city at the time of their production. These texts displayed an eloquent use of the Arabic language. This language approached meaning by indicating a kind of a visual outline that could paint a complex image of the city in the mind of the interpreter. This method of analysis proposes a great role for the Arabic language in developing a critical theory that promotes historical understanding. The study of the structural features and the concealed meanings of Arabic words indicated the capacity of literary criticism to deepen the philosophical aspect of historical theory, in addition to its humanistic and scientific parts.

In order to read these poems comprehensively, the study promoted parallel evaluation of texts, and made comparisons with other contextual details from the same period. The texts that

¹⁰ Gadamer, *Truth and method*, p.162.

survived throughout the history of Baghdad articulated diverse meanings. Yet, the prevailing expression of these texts was nostalgic. This theme expresses opposing impressions of affection, enjoyment, grief and suffering. In addition to nostalgic themes, these texts included a number of spatial themes, since they emphasised specific urban spaces as reliable representatives of the urban history of the city.

The interpretation of these texts was intended to determine the meaning of place rather than its occasional changes in characteristics. For example, the vision of the city as home in poetry highlighted the desired harmony of both material and social values. Also, significant urban forms, such as the Tigris River, palm trees and the delightful natural environment, acted as historical emblems symbolising beauty and eternity. The analysis of these texts indicated other meanings of these components, which have not been underlined in conventional historiography. It emphasised the historical significance of Baghdad as a centre of learning and as a market place. In addition, it highlighted overlooked features of the first planned city of Baghdad, and suggested alternative meanings for various events throughout the city's history.

The textual representation of poetry and historical narratives pointed out concealed aspects of unique architectural forms, such as the courtyard and the dome. The representations illustrated the courtyard as a source of inspiration and reflection, and as a connective element to the exterior environment, and to the sky. The poetry also outlined the additional meanings of domes. These powerful architectural elements were introduced with multiple effective meanings. They were interpreted as contributors to a coherent image of the city, representatives of visual affection, collective elements of tranquillity, social embellishments and lucid identifiable forms. These meanings are ignored in the conventional understanding, which associates domes with particular buildings like mosques, and considers them necessary physical structures and representative of Islamic art. Conventional understanding turned them into monumental forms solely related to the past, and regarded them in the context of heritage and tradition. Conversely, poetry indicated a conceptual meaning for domes as representatives of high ethics, connection and belonging, which indicates a progressive and renewing quality rather than a regressive value.

Unlike conventional illustrations, the beautiful images of Baghdad in the minds of these scholars weren't confined to physical or architectural elements. Natural and social beauties seem to have a great connection that empowered the restoration of conceptual beauty in people's imaginations. While these images identify a particular location in a particular time, they highlight the remarkable historical experience of humanity in general. This double function of literary interpretation, which discloses the particular identity of a place while establishing connections to a universal historical knowledge, is the key advantage of the alternative method. Similar to other historical resources, these texts may contain exaggerated or imaginary ideas. The analysis proved that this situation may occur when expressing the achievements of a leader, yet when it comes to portraying the city, all poems consistently convey unified expressions.

The interpretation of these texts showed that the core motivations of their writing were sensitivity and interconnectivity with society. In addition to their originality and intelligence, these texts communicated complex ideas about the past, validating their reliability as a historiographical source. The analyses of poetry and historical narratives in this thesis suggested that the use of the specific measures of the alternative method in historical criticism promotes a comprehensive understanding of the urban history of the city. These

conceptual measures are of equal importance to the quantitative measures, since in combination they reflect all aspects of the historical experience. These texts were celebrated in this thesis as a creative source of expression, a communicative articulation of space and time, and a source of motivating ideas and theories that reduces the distance between the present and the past.

7.4 The Representation of the Travelogues

The representation of the travelogues of Baghdad in this thesis suggested that travelogues are among the significant resources of its historiography. The interpretation of the travelogues of Baghdad provided specific representations of the city at fixed periods in its history. Generally, travel writings place a great emphasis on the visual quality of the city, and on the generic appearance of space. The traveller usually approaches the city with particular conceptions in his imagination, which are usually inspired by other sources. This period can be considered as the first stage of understanding. When the traveller reaches the city, the second stage begins, as he visually perceives the city and his imaginative preconceptions become rationalised. While some of these imaginative pictures improve, others will be reduced or vanish completely, depending on the condition of the city. The writing of the travelogue is the third stage of this framework of comprehension, where the ideas are combined and presented in a specific way that reflects the ultimate understanding of the city in the mind of the traveller. This shows the crucial impact of each individual's experience and intentions on the context of his writing.

In particular, the travelogues of the eighteenth and nineteenth century offered impressions of visual and geographical aspects. These writings encompassed descriptive narratives and topographical overviews which revealed unknown features of some material aspects of the city's history. The traveller's experience lacks the intimate attachment that comprehends the meaning of the city. Consequently, the writings reflected the traveller's own conceptions more than the city's meaning. They also provided a transient representation of the history of the city. In addition to the use of old fables that lacked historical grounding, the travellers of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries considered direct questioning of, and conversations with, the residents among their resources for history writing. This emphasises the importance of recognising and examining historiographical sources, before the historiographer can reliably interpret them.

In addition to the lack of reliable historical resources in the travel writings of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, myths of backwardness and primitiveness affected the travellers' thinking, and influenced their writing greatly. Despite this partial understanding of the history of the city, and the mixed ideas offered by these writings, conventional studies refer to these travelogues as one of the central resources of the history of this period. Conventional historiography considers the travelogues of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as favourable references, because of the shortage of other writings of that period, and the availability of these writings and the plentiful information they provide. Merging of different ideas resulted in them being transferred from their original object to introduce ambiguities to the historical inquiry.

However, the alternative method in this thesis suggested the representation of travelogues among its multifaceted historiographical references, in order to interconnect various perspectives of the city from inside and from outside, to ensure an integrated approach to an

understanding of history. The travellers of Baghdad in late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries enjoyed an open relationship with the exterior forms of the city. In addition, they reflected on the natural environment and the Tigris River. These components embodied the main attributes of the city for the travellers. The meanings of the city as a hub for advanced learning and as an ancient market place are overlooked in these writings. In addition, the meaning of significant urban forms that were used as venues for learning, such as mosques, was associated with material qualities rather than the inner meaning of these forms.

The writing of the travellers of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries focused on the material form of the city, which was sometimes a disappointment, since travellers approached the city with highly romantic preconceptions. The association of history with a single feature of ostentation or magnification resulted in unrealistic accounts that did not consider change as a common attribute of history. However, the travelogues of Baghdad in this period and in other periods throughout its history provided ample ideas that require a deeper exploration to reveal these significant meanings. It is important to note that the responsibility for the historiographical problems of Baghdad in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries is not limited exclusively to the travelogues of this period. The approaches of subsequent historical writings greatly contributed to the problem. The continuous transmission of, and additions to historical contents, and the divergence of historical ideas, are considered by historians as a transgressive act that is 'a postmodern gaming or poaching'¹¹.

In short, the travelogues of Baghdad encompassed both useful and interpretive ideas, comparable to other writings of the past. The measures of the alternative method assist in recognising these different ideas. The remarkable achievement of these texts is the provision of a different perception of the city from the outsider. These insights complemented sensitive meanings from the inside to develop a better understanding of the history of the city.

7.5 Summary

The comparative study of the implications of conventional methods in historiography and the new method that was suggested in this thesis proved the validity of the alternative method to provide rich understanding of the past. The openness and multi-disciplinary manner of the new method facilitated the exposure of unexplored gaps in this history. The application of the alternative method was aimed at discovering various ideas and impressions from both within and from without. It also intended to establish links between these ideas. These links are the ultimate goal of the alternative method, which favours multiple and integrated ideas over single and separated impressions.

The evaluation of the two literary sources; poetry and travelogues opened up great opportunities to explore more texts in relation to the urban history of Baghdad. The interpretation of the two literary sources presented a number of ideas that reflect individual versions of the past. However, a number of these ideas acted as catalysts for insights into both the Baghdadis and the travellers. For example, the Tigris River gained the appreciation of both groups, though its major influence was on the residents. In their formal, compositional and symbolic characteristics, the forms of the city conveyed a remarkable phenomenon in this representation. This phenomenon is at once simple and complex. It is simple in that its physical character can be identified in various conventional studies that elaborate material

¹¹ Soder, 'The return of cultural history', pp. 73-84.

qualities. Yet it is complex in that the representation suggested by textual interpretation has little to do with formal criteria, and has unlimited capacity for meaning.

The textual representation in this thesis emphasised a further awareness of the techniques of history writing. These techniques usually involve three levels of human interaction; the first level outlines the contemporary relationship between the first writer and a particular subject. This level is the stage of constant writing, which encompasses complicated ideas, understandable to the writer, yet which become mysterious with the advancement of time. This gradual vagueness establishes the ground for the second level of writing, which attempts an interpretation and critical analysis of these texts. Historically, this level seems to allow the freedom to conceptualise history according to the writer's own moral and aesthetic ambitions. Because of the nature of the second stage that opens up to a variety of ways of thinking and a variety of different times, the writings produced in this stage are highly diversified.

The variety and multiplicity of the second stage would be more enriching if the methods of writing followed certain guidelines that could ensure credibility in historical investigation. The third stage of writing is the process of devising such guidelines, which combines original texts and secondary interpretive writings with explicit guidelines and values related to a particular social context, in order to provide a more comprehensible form of historical writing. The poetry, narratives and travelogues of Baghdad in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries represent the first stage of writing. The diverse writings on the history of Baghdad, which were produced after this period, indicate the second stage of writing. The combination of these two stages and their representation according to particular guidelines shows the third stage of writing history. Although this stage is relatively complicated, it contributes to the advancement of history writing and historiography more than the second stage. The two groups of texts represented in this thesis responded to historical inquiry from different angles, yet they achieved an integral outcome, and satisfied the multi-directional nature of the alternative method.

8. Conclusion

The phase between the mid-eighteenth century and mid-nineteenth century was a critical period of change, not just in Baghdad, but across the world. The case of Baghdad represents this worldwide change. Along with other cities that were under Ottoman control, Baghdad experienced urban and political transformation. Although still recognised as a great city, it lost its flourishing character in the eighteenth century due to recurrent conflict and epidemics. At the external level, it started to respond to stronger colonial influences. In the early decades of the nineteenth century, the city experienced architectural and urban development that improved its physical character.. This study endeavoured to search for an alternative method of historiography that would help to reveal the concealed features of that history, and also help further understanding of the past in general.

The indefinite nature of history writing allows modification, depending on the purpose of writing; whether it is for political purposes, entertainment or just a record of exploration. The authority of history has been questioned in terms of its capability to reveal the truth. In many cases, truth and fiction are neatly intertwined, and this blurring can be dangerous if introduced as a method in historiography¹. So it is crucial to develop a critical method that allows our intellect to distinguish between these various ideas. The search for truth is a motivating tool that ignites historical inquiry and supplies it with energy and hope. However, absolute truth is not completely attainable, because of the distance between the past and present, and the different interpretations of the notion of truth itself. Instead of achieving absolute truth, the search for truth in this thesis aimed to reveal additional ideas in order to clarify truthful aspects of the past.

The alternative method in this thesis; the '*infinite interlocking interpretation*', is introduced as an aid to understanding the past. It seeks new perspectives of history, by considering literature and poetry interpretation as effective sources to reveal spatial and subjective concepts of the city in the past. This method emphasises the role of literature in the representation of urban history as a productive source for historiography, and promoted the interconnection of subjective and objective ideas, since texts convey a combination of these ideas. Historians suggest that the truthful claim of texts may have been the main reason for their marginalisation in modern historiography².

The suggested method embraces techniques for a more integrated approach and fewer predetermined judgements. Integration simply implements multiple directions and avoids the preference of certain sources. This approach assists in outlining interpretations that are not bound to narrow views or to single identifiers of objective and subjective methods, which confine research to one or two aspects of history. Integrative thinking is a step forward that

¹ Kellner, H 1985, 'Time and narrative, by Paul Ricoeur; History and criticism, by Dominick LaCapra', *MLN*, vol 100, no 5, pp. 1114-1120.

² Morkoc, *A study of Ottoman narratives on architecture*, p. 307.

touches on all aspects of humanity, and combines them with conceptual and spiritual qualities to improve understanding of the past. In addition to ideas, the method integrates different phases of history, to ensure the continuity of history. The method considers time as a dimension that intervenes deeply in human emotions. Therefore, it is viewed as an open space that continuously generates significance and meaning.

The integrative approach to interpretation enhances intellectual understanding of identity. This is intimately related to a theoretical network, which through the examination of elements in comparison, clarifies the complexities of history, and designates the meaning and appreciation of identity of the city. In addition, a theoretical framework which prevents total separation from Divine inspiration strengthens this identity. The alternative method does not view the seen and unseen, which represent contrasting material and spiritual realities, as separate entities. It rather merges these criteria and represents them as interlocked concepts. The new method is consistent with Akkach's identification of representation as both the universal and particular³. While particular qualities relate to specific norms of society, the representation establishes connections between all elements of history at a universal level.

The presupposition of Gadamer that historical narratives can be utilised to reveal historical accuracy is implemented in this method. However, the focus on literature does not imply an idealistic reconstruction of the past. The alternative method advocates literary interpretation as being amongst the major aids to historical understanding. It also considers conceptual and aesthetic interpretative approaches, which have been the predominant techniques of architectural historiography. In addition, the new method utilises the dispossession theory of Al-Sadr in literary interpretation. This theory implies that simple concepts multiply and transform gradually to turn into complex concepts. This constant development of ideas is infinite and freed from the limits of time and space. The goal of this approach is to continuously promote advancement and development of historical narratives, while maintaining connections with the past.

The alternative method identifies 'urban literature' in the form of narratives and poetry as a different way to read socio-urban history. This method specifies selected pieces of literature that were composed in the designated period for the study. These texts are interpreted according to the guidelines of the alternative method to disclose truthful insights in relation to the urban characteristics of Baghdad at that time. The alternative method in historiography unfolds three guidelines for the interpretation process, which are intended to measure the validity, productivity and benefit of texts. The first measure is advancement, which refers to promoting a continuous progress in the search for meaning, in order to ensure continuity and progression in history. The second measure is balance, which employs flexibility to allow multiple perspectives, and deals equally with time to enable fairer judgements. The third measure is complete vision, which implies that the outcomes of interpretation consider unity and harmony of the historical experience, and avoid any limitation or exclusion. These principles establish relationships between all perspectives of the past, to inform historians on methods of interconnecting divergent observations and emphasising this interlocking factor in the communication between the historian and historical evidence.

Although the material structure of Baghdad has been sketched out through conventional methods in established historical accounts, the analysis of literature and poetry in this thesis highlighted other ways to understand architectural and urban components of the city. These

³ Akkach, *Cosmology and architecture in pre-modern Islam*, p. 162.

ways enabled us to view the same forms differently, and to recognise other meanings related to other forms of knowledge and understanding. The alternative method employed multiple thematic distinctions to reveal the attitudes of these texts towards the evaluation of architectural meaning. Given that nostalgia fashioned writing modes in the literature of the Baghdadis, nostalgic themes of love, affection and attachment generated composite concepts related to the philosophical connections between people and place in history, which helped to identify meanings of the past. In addition to nostalgic themes, literary analyses noted a celebration of the spatial themes of the city. By engaging language, including rhetoric and metaphors to highlight spatial themes, these texts assisted in interpreting architectural meaning and re-evaluating historical forms in relation to their representation in conventional historiography.

The third theme that was implemented in this thesis to generate knowledge of the past is the reflective theme. Reflection usually initiates an idea, a feeling or a visual picture. These concepts are then developed and expanded in the mind, and later transformed into texts. Reflective themes are associated with the literature of travellers in this study. However, the three thematic frameworks are sometimes juxtaposed to bring out extra meaning. Beauty was the core concept of the three themes, since collective dimensions of beauty are capable of adding valuable meaning to historical understanding. The literature of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries elaborated a variety of concepts, but they were often related to the philosophical meaning of beauty. The search highlighted three main aspects of beauty; spiritual or soulful beauty, material or substantial beauty, and social beauty. The writer's perception of beauty dictated his response to the meaning of the city, which was reflected in his intellectual work.

Examining the two groups of texts; poetry and travelogues, proved the centrality of literary methods to establishing connections with the past, and to recognising further meanings of architectural and urban forms. For Baghdadi scholars, sensitivity and affection shaped their writings, and dictated their visions of the past. Yet for travellers, geography was the material underpinning knowledge of the past, as well as political affairs and personal interests. The continuously transforming shape of Baghdad introduced contrasting meanings to the two groups of texts. While the social and natural attractiveness of the city was expressed in the texts of Baghdadi scholars, in addition to its historical beauty, travellers' writings fluctuated between reflections of admiration and disapproval.

The analysis of poetry revealed social consciousness and religious awareness, as well as architectural and urban perceptions. In addition, the expansive meanings of Arabic words enabled the writers to produce complicated texts that reflect a skilful use of the language. The adherence to Islamic rules and the intense use of metaphorical meanings from the Qur'an shaped these texts. In its complexity, beauty in the literature of Baghdadi scholars correlates with Qur'anic perspectives and images. Expressions of beauty in these texts concealed a profound spiritual beauty, and were concerned with the oneness, justice, guidance and wisdom of God, which are the core themes in the Qur'an. According to Islamic teachings, people are encouraged to reflect on the attributes of God and his creations, to gain lessons and meanings for their lives. Among the unique dimensions of beauty that emerged from these interpretations were the meanings of social connection and social beauty, which influenced the understanding of beauty in these texts to a great extent.

Since the scholars and poets of Baghdad were the intermediary group (*halaqa wasatiyya*) between the public and political leaders, their writings expressed a great deal of their social

context, and approached architecture and everyday life within this context. On first examination, the poems seem to refer to matters that do not relate to architecture and urban research. The apparent purpose of writing seems to outline specific dialogue related to leadership, power and other contemporary social aspects. However, upon closer inspection, these texts unveil distinct thematic approaches to every aspect of history, including architecture. This suggests these texts to be historically momentous pieces for mapping out overlooked issues in the history of Baghdad. In addition, the interpretation of the poetry and historical narratives of Baghdadis aid insight into the particular concerns of the society at that time, making them a valid historiographical source.

The poetry and narratives of Al-Uzari, Al-Suwaidi, Al-Tamimi and others, have guided the search to uncover ignored urban themes and spaces in eighteenth and nineteenth century Baghdad. These texts depict architecture through similar metaphorical expressions, and show a parallel awareness and familiarity towards outlining their contexts. They also reveal previously unexamined assumptions about historical writing of this period. Each text highlighted unique conceptual details, which challenge conventional statements about the architectural and urban history of Baghdad. The analysis of poetry and narratives affirms the disparity between political and intellectual themes in history. Interpretation of such literature disclosed more functions of historical recording other than legitimising authority, or predicting and controlling the future, which are emphasised in some conventional writings.

On the other hand, travelogues have been an attractive reference for contemporary historians. The approaches to discovery and investigation of ruins shaped travelogues all over the world, which suggests them as a case worthy of study. These texts present the changing situation of writing, which started from ancient antiquity and led to the improvement of memory⁴. The alternative method, which opened up all possibilities of interpretation, dealt with the travel writings of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as sources of another layer of history, as they contributed significantly to the documentation of that period. The examination of these texts promoted effective engagement with the contexts of that period, and asserted the essential role of both theory and documentation in the understanding of history.

The collective representation of poetry, narratives and travelogues attempted to discover the broader historical context, which does not rely on individuals or on particular incidents. Since all historical writings, in general, contain a mix of truthful and fictional ideas, the use of the alternative method along with scholarly judgement is crucial for identifying the variety of ideas. Through recognising multiple literary sources of architectural and urban analysis, the suggested method initiated a new approach to writing about different historical records. Also by integrating this literary method with other methods, the alternative method establishes an effective means of integration that enhances particular qualities and assists in differentiating truthful and fictional concepts, while maintaining unity and strong relationships between different interpretations of the past.

The procedure of establishing relationships between different historiographical sources and between different periods in history reduces tension and displacement of meaning and significance. The alternative method enabled the relocation of architecture into a context where form was not determined by a single cause, and where human intelligence, in collaboration with environmental resources, was backed up by divine laws to produce these

⁴ Lewis, *History: remembered, recovered, invented*, p. 56.

forms. The case of Baghdad proved that the understanding of cities is not limited to official or political documents. This research verified that Baghdad effectively existed before the actual construction of the round city, since social relationships and market activity were the permanent identifiers of the place. Therefore, we can conclude that the continuity of cities is related to social activity rather than other meanings. The use of the alternative method and textual representation proved the validity of this method to understand the complex history of Baghdad, because of the great capacity of texts to reveal the hidden ideas of the past.

This study provided evidence that the use of poetry and travelogues inform historical understanding, and that successful historical writing should always open to other disciplines to gain greater meanings of the past. However, the fate of historiographical studies does not depend entirely on abstract theories. It is rather the responsibility of historians to apply productive techniques based on historical theory to analyse architectural experience. Since the aim of this interpretation is the endless advancement of historical understanding, methodological means of investigation and their outcomes may evolve constantly to fit a systematic interpretation of historical texts.

The study showed that the key difference between the alternative method and conventional methods is that the alternative method initiates meaning and then moves to material qualities, while conventional methods start with material descriptions and attempt to formulate meaning afterwards. In other words, an understanding of history through the processes of the alternative method relates to ideas rather than locations, and goes beyond the limitations of time and place. However, the alternative and conventional methods are not a dichotomy, but there is a constant negotiation in the use of both methods in history writing. Also among the important outcomes of this study is the acknowledgement of the vital influence of attitudes on the writing of history. Perhaps the key aim of re-writing history should be to institute the elevation of knowledge as the ultimate goal of writing, instead of temporary, personal or political benefit.

9. Bibliography

Abdullah, T 2001, *Merchants, mamluks, and murder: the political economy of trade in eighteenth-century Basra*, SUNY series in the social and economic history of the Middle East, State University of New York Press, Albany.

Aga Khan Award for Architecture 1986, *Architectural education in the Islamic world: proceedings of seminar ten in the series: Architectural transformations in the Islamic world*, April 21-25, 1986, Granada, Spain, Concept Media Pte Ltd, Singapore.

Akbar, JA 1984, *Responsibility in the traditional Muslim built environment*, thesis, Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Akcan, E 1984, 'Histories of the immediate present: Inventing architectural modernism', edited by Anthony Vidler, *Journal of Architectural Education*, vol. 62, no. 3 pp. 89-90.

Akkach, S 1990, *The sacred pattern of traditional Islamic architecture according to Sufi doctrine: a study in architectural symbolism*, thesis, University of Sydney.

——— 1997, 'The world of imagination in Ibn Arabi's ontology', in *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, vol. 24, no. 1, pp. 97-113.

——— 2002, 'On culture', in Akkach S & University of Adelaide Centre for Asian & Middle Eastern Architecture (eds), *De-placing difference: architecture, culture and imaginative geography*, Centre for Asian and Middle Eastern Architecture, The University of Adelaide.

——— 2005, *Cosmology and architecture in pre-modern Islam: an architectural reading of mystical ideas*, SUNY series in Islam, State University of New York Press, Albany.

Akkach, S, Fung, S, Scriber, P (eds) & University of Adelaide Centre for Asian & Middle Eastern Architecture 1999, *Self, place & imagination: cross-cultural thinking in architecture*, 1st edn, Centre for Asian & Middle Eastern Architecture, University of Adelaide, Adelaide.

Akkach, S & Nabulusi, Aa-Gi'il 2009, *Letters of a Sufi scholar: the correspondence of Abd Al-Ghani Al-Nabulusi (1641-1731)*, Brill, Leiden; Boston.

Akkach, S & University of Adelaide Centre for Asian & Middle Eastern Architecture (eds) 2002, *De-placing difference: architecture, culture and imaginative geography*, Centre for Asian and Middle Eastern Architecture, The University of Adelaide.

Aksan, VH, Goffman, D 2007, *The early modern Ottomans: remapping the Empire*, New York, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK.

Al-Alusi 1987, *Baghdad fil shir Al-Arabi: min tarikhiha wa akhbariha Al-Hadhariyya* (Baghdad in the Arabic poetry: its history and its cultural events), Al- Majma' Al-Ilmi Al-Iraqi, Baghdad.

Al-Ameen, M 1951, *A'yan Al-Shi'a* (famous shi'a scholars), Vol. 7, viewed 2 June 2013, <http://www.alhikmeh.org/main/pages/tex_new.php?tid=2728>.

- Al-Attar, I May 2010, 'Understanding the urban heritage of Baghdad: Issues of conservation in the central area', *Proceedings of the first International conference for urban and architectural heritage in Islamic countries*, Saudi Commission for Tourism and Antiquities, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.
- Al-Baghdadi, N 2005 April, 'From heaven to dust: metamorphosis of the book in pre-modern Arab culture', *The Medieval History Journal*, vol. 8 pp. 83-107.
- Al-Baheth dictionary, < <http://www.baheth.info>>.
- Al-Bustani, K (ed) 2009, *Dewan Safey Al-Din Al-Hilli* (The poem collection of Al-Hilli), Dar Saber, Beirut, viewed 8 June 2013. <www.waqfeya.com/book.php?bid=3112>.
- Al-Bustani, M, *Al-Tafseer Al-Binaee lil Qur'an Al-Kareem* (The structural interpretation of the holy Qur'an), viewed 6 June 2013, <<http://www.alseraj.net/a-k/Qran/al-tafseer/01/fehrsl.htm>>.
- Al-Duri, A 1987, *The historical formation of the Arab nation: a study in identity and consciousness*, Croom Helm, London.
- Al-Durubi, I 2001, *Al-Baghdadiyyun, akhbaruhum wa majalisuhum* (The Baghdadis, their experiences and their gatherings), Introduction by Osama Al-Naqshabandi, Second edn, Ministry of Education, Dar Al-Shu'on Al-Thaqafiyya Al-A'mma, Baghdad.
- Alexander, CM 1928, *Baghdad in bygone days: from the journals and correspondence of Claudius Rich, traveller, artist, linguist, antiquary and British resident at Baghdad, 1808-1821*, 1st edn, J. Murray, London.
- Al-Ghadeer Centre for Islamic Studies 1995, *The Wahabia movement: The true image*, Al-Ghadeer Publications, Beirut, Lebanon.
- Al-Haidari, Sh 2008, 'Safahat min tarekh Al-Kutub wal kutubiyyeen fi suq Al-Saray' (Pages from the history of books and book sellers in suq Al-Saray), *Al-Mawruth Journal*, vol. 7, viewed 6 June 2013, <<http://www.iraqnl.org/fp/journal7/23.htm>>.
- Al-Janabi, B 2009, 'Tarekh Baghdad yastarkhi fi dhilal maqha Al-Khaffafeen', viewed 3 June 2013, <www.aljanabi.com>.
- Al-Karkukaly, R 1992, *Dawhat Al-Wozara' fi tarekh hawadeth Baghdad Al-Zawra'* (History of Baghdad; the Zawra'), Alshareef Alradhy publishing, Qum.
- Al-Khazraji, N 2008, 'Taqaseem Al-Qafza Al-Adabiyya fil alfiyya Al-Thaniya Al-Hijriyya' (The tracing attributes of literature in the second Hijri millennium), *Al-Hewar Al-Mutamaddin*, no. 2156, <<http://www.ahewar.org/debat/show.art.asp?aid=121268#>>.
- Al-Rumethi, J, 'Maqahi Baghdad' (The coffee-shops of Baghdad), viewed 3 June 2013, <<https://sites.google.com/site/elkarbalaee/baghdadcoffieshops>>.
- Al-Sa'di, MR (ed.) 1902, *Dewan Sheikh Kadhem Al-Uzari Al-Baghdadi* (The poem collection of Sheikh Kadhem Al-Uzari), Al-Matba'a Al-Mustafawiyya, Bombay, <www.Al-mostafa.com>.
- Al-Sadr, MB 2003, *Al-Islam yaqud Al-Hayat, Al-Madrasa Al-Islamiyya, Risalatuna* (Islam leading life, Islamic school, our message), Centre of Special Studies of Imam Al-Sadr writings, Shariat, Qum.
- 2006, *Our philosophy*, Ansarriyan Publications, Qum.
- Al-Sagheer, MH, *Tatawwur Al-Bahth Al-Dalali fil Qur'an Al-kareem* (The development of deeper studies of the meanings in the Qur'an), Mawsu'at Al-Dirasat Al-Qur'aniyya, viewed 6 June 2013, <<http://www.alseraj.net/maktaba/kotob/quran/tatawer/01.html#2>>.
- Al-Tamimi, A-M, 'Al-Mawtho'iyya wa Al-Thatiyya fil kitaba Al-tareekhiyya Al-Mu'asera' (Objectivity and subjectivity in modern history writings), *A'lam Al-Fikr*, vol. 29, no. 4, viewed 3 January 2013, <<http://annabaa.org/nba58/hasad.htm>>.

- Al-Warid, BA 1980, *Hawadeth Baghdad fi 12 qarn*, Al-Dar Al-Arabiyya, Baghdad.
- Al-Warrak 2007, *Baghdad bi-aqlam rahhalah* (History of Baghdad as written by travellers), Al-Warrak Publishing Ltd, London.
- Al-Zarkali, Kh 1978, *Al-A'alam* (Famous scholars), Al-Warrak Publishing, London, viewed 9 June 2013. <<http://www.alwaraq.net/Core/waraq/coverpage?bookid=511&option=1>>
- American Psychological Association. 2009, *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association*, 6th edn, American Psychological Association, Washington, DC.
- Anderson, S & Pollak, MD 1997, *The education of the architect: historiography, urbanism, and the growth of architectural knowledge: essays presented to Stanford Anderson*, MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass.
- Ansari, MF-U-R 1940, *Islam and Christianity in the modern world: being an exposition of the Qur'anic view of Christianity in the light of modern research*, World Federation of Islamic Missions, Karachi.
- Ansari, MT 2001, *Secularism, Islam, modernity: selected essays of Alam Khundmiri*, SAGE, London.
- Arab Encyclopedia 1981, <<http://www.arab-ency.com>>
- Arendt, H 1967, *The origins of totalitarianism*, Rev. edn, George Allen & Unwin, London.
- Arkoun M & Aga Khan Award for Architecture 1986, *Architecture education in the Islamic world: proceedings of seminar ten in the series Architectural transformations in the Islamic world*, Granada, Spain, Concept Media Pte Ltd, Singapore, p.22.
- Armstrong, H & Queensland University of Technology Cultural Landscape Research Unit 2001, 'Setting the theoretical scene', *Investigating Queensland's cultural landscapes: contested terrains series; report 1*, Cultural Landscape Research Unit, Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane.
- Arnszald, U, Gadamer, H-G, Malpas, J & Kertscher, J 2002, *Gadamer's century: essays in honor of Hans-Georg Gadamer*, MIT Press, Cambridge, London.
- Atasoy, N 2004, 'Ottoman garden pavilions and tents', *Muqarnas*, vol. Vol. 21, Essays in Honor of J. M. Rogers pp. pp. 15-19
- Atiyah, Gn 1973, *Iraq, 1908-1921: a socio-political study*, Arab Institute for Research and Publication, Beirut.
- Atkinson, R & Bridge, G 2005, *Gentrification in a global context: the new urban colonialism*, Housing and society series, Routledge, London, New York.
- Ayduz, S 2008, 'Nasuh Al-Matraki: a noteworthy Ottoman artist-mathematician of the sixteenth century', Viewed 5 January 2014, <MuslimHeritage.com>.
- Bacon, EN 1967, *Design of cities*, Thames and Hudson, London.
- Bayat, MM 2008, *Futhuli Al-Baghdadi: sha'er Ahlul-Bayt* (Futhuli Al-Baghdadi: The poet of the Prophet's household), Bizturkmeniz, viewed 6 June 2013. <<http://www.bizturkmeniz.com/ar/showArticle.asp?id=13397>>.
- Behrens-Abouseif, A, Necipoglu, G, Rogers, JM (eds) 2004, *Muqarnas: an annual on the visual culture of the Islamic world*, Vol 21, Brill, Leiden.
- Berger, M 1964, *The Arab world today*, 2 edn, Doubleday & Company Anchor Book, Garden City, N.Y.
- Bessel, R, Guyatt, N, Rendall, J (eds), 2010, *War, empire and slavery, 1770-1830*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York.

- Bianca, S & Eidgenossische Technische Hochschule Zurich Institut fur Orts- RegionAl- und Landesplanung. 2000, *Urban form in the Arab world: past and present*, ORL-Schriften, 46, VDF, Zurich.
- Black, E 2004, *Banking on Baghdad: the crossroads of conquest and commerce*, John Wiley & Sons, Inc, Hoboken, N.J.
- Boyer, MC 1994, *The city of collective memory: its historical imagery and architectural entertainments*, MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass.
- Bozdogan, S & American Council of Learned Societies 2001, *Modernism and nation building Turkish architectural culture in the early republic*, University of Washington Press, Seattle.
- Bozdogan, S 1984, 'Architectural history in professional education: reflections on postcolonial challenges to the modern survey', *Journal of Architectural Education*, vol. 37, pp. 207-215.
- Buckingham, JS 1827, *Travels in Mesopotamia, including a journey from Aleppo, across the Eurphrates to Orfah, (the Ur of the Chaldees) through the plains of the Turcomans, to Diarbeker, in Asia Minor; from thence to Mardin, on the borders of the Great Desert, and by the Tigris to Mousul and Bagdad; with researches on the ruins of Babylon, Nineveh, Arbela, Ctesiphon, and Seleucia*, Henry Colburn, London.
- 1855, *Autobiography of James Silk Buckingham (1786-1855)*, vol. 2, Longmans, Brown, Green, and Longmans, London.
- 1971, *Travels in Mesopotamia, including a journey from Aleppo, across the Eurphrates to Orfah, (the Ur of the Chaldees,) through the plains of the Turcomans, to Diarbeker, in Asia Minor; from thence to Mardin, on the borders of the Great Desert, and by the Tigris to Mousul and Bagdad; with researches on the ruins of Babylon, Nineveh, Arbela, Ctesiphon, and Seleucia*, Hants Gregg International, Famborough.
- Burton, RF & Shumaker, D 1978, *Tales from the Arabian nights: selected from the book of the thousand nights and a night*, Crown Publishers, New York.
- Calhoun, CJ 1994, *Social theory and the politics of identity*, Blackwell, Oxford, Cambridge, MA.
- Chapman, M, Ostwald, M (eds.) 2010, 'Imagining: Proceedings of the 27th International SAHANZ conference', Society of Architectural Historians Australia and New Zealand in (ed.), Newcastle, N.S.W., Australia.
- Chard, C 1999, *Pleasure and guilt on the grand tour: travel writing and imaginative geography, 1600-1830*, Manchester University Press, Manchester.
- Choueiri, YM 1990, *Islamic fundamentalism, themes in right-wing interpretation and politics series*, Pinter, London.
- 2003, *Modern Arab historiography: historical discourse and the nation-state*, Culture and civilisation in the Middle East, Routledge, Curzon, New York.
- 2005, *A companion to the history of the Middle East*, Blackwell companions to world history, Blackwell Pub Ltd, Malden, MA.
- Cihangir, E 2007, *Uluslararası Eminonu Sempozyumu: tebligler kitab International Symposium on Eminonu: the book of notifications*, Eminonu Belediyesi Başkanlg, Istanbul.
- Coke, R 1927, *Baghdad, the city of peace*, 1 vols, Thornton Butterworth Ltd, London.
- Cooperson, M 1996, 'Baghdad in Rhetoric and Narrative', *Muqarnas: an annual on the visual culture of the Islamic world. Volume 13, Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture*, pp. 99-113.
- Crinson, M 2003, *Modern architecture and the end of empire*, British art and visual culture since 1750, Ashgate, Burlington, VT.
- 2004, *Empire building: orientalism and Victorian architecture*, Routledge, London, New York.

- 2005, *Urban memory: history and amnesia in the modern city*, Routledge, London, New York.
- Dabrowska, K & Hann, G 2008, *Iraq then and now: a guide to the country and its people*, Bradt Travel Guides, Chalfont St Peter.
- Dean, M 1994, *Critical and effective histories: Foucault's methods and historical sociology*, Routledge, London, New York.
- Debono, C & Australian Council of National Trusts (eds) 2000, *The National Trust into the new millennium: conference proceedings*, Australian Council of National Trusts, Canberra.
- Delius, P & Hattstein, M 2004, *Islam: art and architecture*, English edn, Konemann, Cologne.
- Denzin, NK & Lincoln, YS 2005, *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research*, 3rd edn, Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks.
- Dibner, B 1970, *Moving the obelisks: a chapter in engineering history in which the Vatican obelisk in Rome in 1586 was moved by muscle power, and a study of more recent similar moves*, M.I.T. Press, Cambridge, Mass.
- Eagleton, T, Jameson, F, Said, EW & Field Day Theatre Company 1990, *Nationalism, colonialism, and literature*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, Minn.
- Elwazani, S, Malhis, Sh & Al-Qawasmi, J (eds) 2008, *Responsibilities and Opportunities in Architectural Conservation; Theory, Education, & Practice*, vol. 2, CSAAR, Amman.
- Eruzun, C, Jinnai, H & Tanimizu, J 1990, *Turkey, pilgrimage to cities: Toruko toshi junrei*, no. 93. Process Architecture, Tokyo.
- Ettinghausen, R, Grabar, O & Jenkins, M 2001, *Islamic art and architecture 650-1250*, Pelican history of art, Yale University Press, New Haven, CT.
- Fa'eq Beg, S 2010, *Tarekh Baghdad* (history of Baghdad), First edn, Dar Al-Rafidayn for publishing, Beirut, Lebanon.
- Fattah, HM 1997, *The politics of regional trade in Iraq, Arabia, and the Gulf, 1745-1900*, State University of New York Press, Albany, NY.
- Fattah, HM & Caso, F 2009, *A brief history of Iraq*, Facts On File, New York.
- Fletcher, B & Cordingley, RA 1963, *A history of architecture on the comparative method*, 17th edn, Scribner, New York.
- Fletcher, B & Musgrove, J 1987, *Sir Banister Fletcher's A history of architecture*, 19th edn, Butterworths, London, Boston.
- Fogg, WP 1985, *Arabistan, or, The land of the Arabian nights: being travels through Egypt, Arabia, and Persia, to Bagdad*, Darf, London.
- Foucault, M 1972, *The archaeology of knowledge and the discourse on language*, 1st American edn, Pantheon Books, New York.
- 2002, *The order of things: an archaeology of the human sciences*, Routledge, London, New York.
- Frank, AG 1998, *ReOrient: global economy in the Asian Age*, University of California Press, Berkeley.
- Fukuyama, F 1992, *The end of history and the last man*, Free Press, Maxwell Macmillan Canada, Maxwell Macmillan International, New York, Toronto.
- Fuller, S 2006, *The new sociological imagination*, SAGE, London; Thousand Oaks, Calif.

- Gadamer, HG 1977, *Philosophical hermeneutics: Hans-Georg Gadamer*, University of California Press, Berkeley.
- 1982, *Reason in the age of science*, MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass.
- 1994, *Literature and philosophy in dialogue: essays in German literary theory*, State University of New York Press, Albany.
- 1997, *Truth and method*, 2nd rev. edn, Continuum, New York.
- 1999, *Hermeneutics, religion, and ethics*, Yale University Press, New Haven.
- 2000, 'Subjectivity and intersubjectivity, subject and person', *Continental Philosophy Review*, no. 33, pp. 275-287.
- 2006a, 'Artworks in word and image', *Theory, Culture, and Society*, vol. 23, no. 1, pp. 57-83.
- 2006b, 'Classical and philosophical hermeneutics', *Theory, Culture, and Society*, vol. 23, no. 1, pp. 29-56.
- 2006c, 'Language and understanding (1970)', *Theory, Culture, and Society*, vol. 23, pp. 13-27.
- Ghaidan U 2008, 'Damage to Iraqi's wider heritage', in Stone, PG, Farchakh, J & Fisk, R (eds.), *The destruction of cultural heritage in Iraq*, The heritage matters series, vol. 1, Boydell Press, Woodbridge, Suffolk.
- Gibb, HAR 1963, *Arabic literature*, 2nd rev edn, Clarendon Press, Oxford.
- 1975, *Modern trends in Islam*, Librarie du Liban, Beirut.
- Gibb, HAR & Bowen, H 1957, *Islamic society and the west: a study of the impact of western civilization on Moslem culture in the Near East*, 2 vols, Oxford University Press, London.
- Grabar, O 1987, *The formation of Islamic art*, Rev. and enl. edn, Yale University Press, New Haven.
- Gunn, GC 2003, *First globalization: the Eurasian exchange, 1500-1800*, World social change, Rowman & Littlefield, Lanham, Md.
- Halbwachs, M 1958, *The psychology of social class*, Heinemann books on sociology, Heinemann, London.
- Hall, C 2000, *Cultures of empire: colonisers in Britain and the Empire in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries: a reader*, Routledge, New York.
- Hall, P 1996, *Cities of tomorrow : an intellectual history of urban planning and design in the twentieth century*, Updated edn, Blackwell Publishers, Oxford, Cambridge, Mass.
- Hamadeh, Sh 2007, 'Public spaces and the garden culture of Istanbul in the eighteenth century', in Aksan, VH, Goffman, D (ed.) *The Early modern Ottomans: remapping the Empire*, New York, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Hamori, A 1974, *On the art of medieval Arabic literature*, Princeton essays in literature, Princeton University Press, Princeton, N.J.
- Harley, JB & Woodward, D 1987, *Cartography in prehistoric, ancient, and medieval Europe and the Mediterranean*, The history of cartography, University of Chicago Press, Chicago.
- Harley, JB & Woodward, D 1992, *History of cartography, cartography in the traditional Islamic and south Asian societies*, Univ.Chicago P.

References

- Herring, A, Swedlund, AC & Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research 2010, *Plagues and epidemics: infected spaces past and present*, English edn, Berg, Oxford, New York.
- Heude, W 1970, *A voyage up the Persian Gulf and a journey overland from India to England in 1817*, Gregg International, Westmead.
- Hopkins, IWJ 1967, 'The maps of Carsten Niebuhr: 200 years after', *Cartographic Journal*, vol. 4, no. 2, pp. 115-118.
- Hubbard, P 2006, *City: key ideas in geography*, Routledge, Abingdon.
- Inalcik, H & Quataert, D 1997, *An economic and social history of the Ottoman Empire, Volume 2: 1600-1914*, 2 vols, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- India Persian Boundary Commission, Blanford, WT, Goldsmid, FJ, St. John, OBC, Lovett, B & Euan-Smith, CB (eds) 1876, *Eastern Persia: an account of the journeys of the Persian boundary commission, 1870-71-72*, 2 vols., Macmillan and Co, London.
- Ismael, T, Andrew, 1950 (ed.) 2010, *Islam in the eyes of the West: images and realities in an age of terror*, Routledge, New York, NY.
- Issawi, CP 1980, *The economic history of Turkey, 1800-1914*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago.
- 1988, *The fertile crescent, 1800-1914: a documentary economic history*, Oxford University Press, New York.
- Izz Al-Din, Y 1976, *Dawud pasha wa nihayat Al-Mamalik fi Al-Iraq* (Dawud Pasha and the decline of the Mamluk dynasty in Iraq), Matba'at Al-Sha'b, Baghdad.
- James, WA & Giovannini, J 1993, *Kohn Pedersen Fox: architecture and urbanism, 1986-1992*, Rizzoli, New York.
- Jawad, M & Susa, A 1958, *Dalil kharitat Baghdad Al-Mufasssal fi khitat Baghdad qadiman wa-hadithan* (A detailed guide to the maps of Baghdad), Matbuat Al-Majma Al-Ilmi Al-Iraqi, Baghdad.
- Jawad, M, Susa, A, Makkiyya, M & Ma'ruf, N 1968, *Baghdad*, Iraqi Engineers Association with Gubenkian Foundation, Baghdad.
- Jayyusi, SK, Holod, R, Petruccioli, A & Raymond, A 2008, *The city in the Islamic world*, Brill, Leiden; Boston.
- Jones, JF 1998, *Memoirs of Baghdad, Kurdistan and Turkish Arabia, 1857: selections from the records of the Bombay Government, new series*, Archive Editions, Great Britain.
- Jones, L & Harvard University. Center for the Study of World Religions 2000, *The hermeneutics of sacred architecture : experience, interpretation, comparison*, 2 vols., Religions of the world, Distributed by Harvard University Press for Harvard University Center for the Study of World Religions, Cambridge, Mass.
- Kasaba, Ra & Bozdogan, S (eds.) 1997, *Rethinking modernity and national identity in Turkey*, University of Washington Press, Seattle.
- Kellner, H 1985, 'Time and Narrative by Paul Ricoeur; History and criticism by Dominick LaCapra', *MLN*, vol. 100, no. 5.
- Khalil, EA-D 1978, *Al-Tafseer Al-Islami lil-tarekh* (The Islamic method of history interpretation), 2nd edition edn, Dar Al-Anwar and Dar Al-Tarbiya, Baghdad.
- Khayyat, J (ed.) 1968, *Arba'at qurun min tarikh Al-Iraq Al-Hadeeth* (four centuries of the modern history of Iraq), trans, Longrigg S, 4th edn, Baghdad.

- Khoja, KA 2006, 'Muqtatafat min kitab Gulshn Khulfa by Murtadha, Nadhmi Zadeh' (excerpts of Gulshn Khulfa), *Arabic Translators International*, viewed 4 August 2012, <<http://www.atinternational.org/forums/showthread.php?t=7467>>.
- Khoury D R 2007, 'Who is a true Muslim? Exclusion and inclusion among polemicists of reform in nineteenth-century Baghdad', in Aksan, VH, Goffman, D (ed.), *The early modern Ottomans: remapping the Empire*, New York: Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK, p.273.
- Khudayyir, M 2008, *Basrayatha: the story of a city*, Verso, London, New York.
- Khulusi, S (ed.) 1962, *Tarekh Baghdad: Hadeqat Al-Zawra' fi sirat Al-Wuzara' by Abdul-Rahman Al-Suwaidi* (history of Baghdad by Abdul-Rahman Al-Suwaidi), vol. 1, Mataba'at Al-Za'eem, Baghdad.
- Klee, P & Moholy-Nagy, S 1968, *Pedagogical sketchbook*, Faber and Faber, London, England.
- Koolhaas, R, Kwinter, S & Rice University 1996, *Rem Koolhaas: conversations with students*, 2nd edn, Rice University, Princeton Architectural Press, Houston, Tex, New York.
- Korner, F 2005, *Revisionist Koran hermeneutics in contemporary Turkish university theology: rethinking Islam*, Ergon, Wurzburg.
- Kritzeck, J 1964, *Anthology of Islamic literature, from the rise of Islam to modern times*, 1st edn, Holt, Rinehart, New York.
- LaCapra, D 1985, *History & criticism*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, N.Y.
- Lankarany, M 1949, *Madkhal Al-Tafseer* (Introduction to Interpretation), Markaz Fiqh Al-A'emma Al-Athar, viewed 6 June 2013, <<http://www.alseraj.net/maktaba/kotob/quran/Tafsir/Tafsir.html>>.
- Lassner, J 1970, *The topography of Baghdad in the early Middle Ages: text and studies*, Wayne State University Press, Detroit.
- Le Strange, G, Fransis, Br & Awwad, Krs 1985, *Buldan Al-Khilafah Al-Sharqiyah: yatanawalu sifat Al-Iraq wa-Al-Jazirah wa-Iran wa-aqalim Asiyah Al-Wusta mundhu Al-fath Al-Islami hatta ayyam Taymur* (translated to Arabic), 2nd edn, Mu'assasat Al-Risalah, Beirut.
- Lewis, B 2002, *What went wrong? The clash between Islam and modernity in the Middle East*, Weidenfeld & Nicholson, London.
- 2004, *From Babel to dragomans: interpreting the Middle East*, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London.
- Lewis, B & Thomas Leiper Kane Collection 1975, *History: remembered, recovered, invented*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey.
- Longrigg, SH 1968, *Four centuries of modern Iraq*, Librairie du Liban, Beirut.
- Lovitt, W & Lovitt, HB 1995, *Modern technology in the Heideggerian perspective*, E Mellen Press, Lewiston, NY.
- Macionis, JJ & Parrillo, VN 2007, *Cities and urban life*, 4th edn, Pearson Prentice Hall, Upper Saddle River, NJ.
- Makkiyya, M 2005, *Baghdad*, 1st edn, Al-Warrak Publishing Ltd, London.
- Malpas, J 2012, *Heidegger and the thinking of place: explorations in the topology of being*, MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass.
- March, L 1998, *Architectonics of humanism: essays on number in architecture*, Academy Editions, Chichester, West Sussex.

References

- March, L & Steadman, P 1971, *The geometry of environment: an introduction to spatial organization in design*, RIBA Pubs, London.
- Ma'ruf, N 2005, 'Al-Hayat Al-Thaqafiyya fi Baghdad' (educational life in Baghdad), in Makkiyya, M (ed.), *Baghdad*, 1st edn, Al-Warrak Publishing Ltd, London.
- Mason, RB 2004, *Shine like the sun: lustre-painted and associated pottery from the medieval Middle East*, Bibliotheca Iranica, Islamic art and architecture series 12, Mazda Publishers in association with Royal Ontario Museum, Costa Mesa, Calif.
- McGinnis, J & Reisman, DC 2007, *Classical Arabic philosophy: an anthology of sources*, Hackett Publications, Indianapolis.
- Menage, VL 1964, *Neshri's history of the Ottomans: the sources and development of the text*, London, University School of African & Oriental Studies, London Oriental series, vol 16, London.
- Mignan, R 1829, *Travels in Chaldaea: including a journey from Bussorah to Bagdad, Hillah and Babylon, performed on foot in 1827 with observations on the sites and remains of Babel, Seleucia and Ctesiphon*, Colburn and Bentley, London.
- Mills, CW 1959, *The social imagination*, Oxford University Press, New York.
- Mitchell, T 1988, *Colonising Egypt*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, New York.
- Mohammed Ali, IM 2008, *Madinat Baghdad: Al-Abaad Al-Ijtima'iyya wa thoruf Al-Nashah* (Baghdad city; social aspects and the founding circumstances), Al-Hathariyya liltibaaah wal-nashr, Al-Aref lilmatbu'at, Baghdad.
- Moholy-Nagy, S 1968, *Matrix of man: an illustrated history of urban environment*, Pall Mall Press, London.
- 1976, *Native genius in anonymous architecture in North America*, Schocken Books, New York.
- Morkoc, SB & University of Chicago 2008, 'Reading architecture from the text: The Ottoman story of the four marble columns', *Journal of Near Eastern studies*, vol 1 issue 67.
- Morkoc, SB 2010, *A study of Ottoman narratives on architecture: text, context and hermeneutics*, Academia Press, Bethesda.
- Mumford, L 1956, *From the ground up: observations on contemporary architecture, housing, highway building, and civic design*, A Harvest book, 13, Harcourt Brace, New York.
- 1973, *Interpretations and forecasts, 1922-1972: studies in literature, history, biography, technics, and contemporary society*, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, New York.
- Murphey, R 2007, *Studies on Ottoman society and culture, 16th-18th centuries*, Variorum Collected Studies Series; CS880, Ashgate Pub., Burlington, VT.
- Murray, J 1937, *Baghdad sketches*, Albemarle Street, London, W., London.
- Naji, H, 'Simat Al-Ata'a Al-Fikri fil qarn Al-Thamin Al-Hijri' (The characteristics of intellectual products of the eighth hijri century), in *Majma' Allugha Al-Arabiyya*, viewed 6 June 2013, <<http://www.majma.org/jo/majma/index.php/2009-02-10-09-36-00/273-63-7.html>>.
- Nalbantoglu, GB 1998, 'Toward postcolonial openings: Rereading Sir Banister Fletscher's history of architecture', *Assemblage*, no. 35, pp. 7-11.
- Nalbantoglu, GB & Wong, CT 1997, *Postcolonial spacs*, Princeton Architectural Press, New York.
- Nalbantoglu GB, Altinyildiz N 2002, 'Speaking of architecture', *International Journal of Art & Design Education*, vol. 21, no. 2, pp. 146-153.

- Naqshawani, A 2009, 'Certainty', Lecture on *yaqeen* (certainty) delivered in Toronto, Canada.
- Nasar, JL 1998, *The evaluative image of the city*, Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, CA.
- Nawras, AMK 1975, *Hukam Al-Mamalik 1750-1831* (The Mamluck rulers), silsilat Al-kutub Al-Haditha 84, Al-Maktaba Al-Wataniyya (The National Library) number 611, Baghdad.
- Necipoglu, GI 2005, *The age of Sinan: architectural culture in the Ottoman Empire*, Reaktion, London.
- Necipoglu, GI & Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture 1995, *Muqarnas: an annual on Islamic art and architecture*, Vol 12, E.J. Brill, Leiden, the Netherlands.
- Niebuhr, C (1733-1815) 1983, *Entdeckungen im Orient: Reise nach Arabien und anderen Ländern 1761-1767*, K. Thienemanns Verlag, Stuttgart.
- Niebuhr, C & Heron, R 1792, *Travels through Arabia and other countries in the East*, R. Morison and Son, Edinburgh.
- Niebuhr, R 1949, *Faith and history: a comparison of Christian and modern views of history*, Nisbet, London.
- Oghlu, FY 2011, *Futhuli Al-Baghdadi: sultan Al-shu'ara' Al-Turkman* (Futhuli Al-Baghdadi: the master of poets), Eskitisin, Kirkuk, viewed 9 June 2013, <<http://eskitisin.net/adab/turk%20sairlari/fuduli%2002.html>>.
- Ousterhout, R 1995, 'Ethnic identity and cultural appropriation in early Ottoman architecture', in GI Necipoglu & Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture (eds.), *Muqarnas: an annual on Islamic art and architecture*, E.J. Brill Leiden, vol.12, the Netherlands.
- Palmer, B 2005, 'Dominick LaCapra history in transit: experience, identity, critical theory', *The American Historical Review*, vol. 110, no. 2, pp. 437-438.
- Passmore, J & Australian Academy of the Humanities 1975, *Art, science and imagination*, Sydney University Press, Sydney.
- Pieri, C 2006, 'Baghdad architecture 1921-1958: reflections on history as a strategy of vigilance', *Bulletin of the Royal Institute for Inter-Faith Studies*, vol. 8, Ma'had Al-Malaki lil-dirasat Al-Diniyah, Amman, Jordan.
- Rabinow, P 1989, *French modern: norms and forms of the social environment*, MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass.
- Ra'of, IA (ed.) 1978, *Tarekh hawadeth Baghdad wal Basrah 1186-1192 AH, 1772-1778 AD* by Abdul-Rahman Al-Suwaidi (history of Baghdad and Basra's events 1772-1778 by Abdul-Rahman Al-Suwaidi), The Ministry of Education and Arts, Baghdad.
- 2000, *Ma'alem Baghdad fil-quroon Al-Muta'akhira* (The characteristics of Baghdad in the late centuries), Baytul-Hikma, Baghdad, Iraq.
- (ed.) 2008, *Akhbaar Baghdad wa ma jawaraha min Al-Bilad* by Mahmud Shukri Al-Alusi (Narrations of Baghdad and the neighbouring countries by Mahmud Shukri Al-Alusi), Addar Alarabiyya lilmawso'at, Beirut.
- 2009, *Attareekh wal-Mu'arrikhoon Al-Iraqiyyoon fil ahd Al-Othmani* (History and Iraqi historians during the Ottomans' age), Al-Warrak Publishing Ltd, Beirut, London.
- (ed.) 2007, *Tarekh Al-Usar Al-Ilmiyyah fi Baghdad* by Mohammed Said Al-Rawi Al-Baghdadi (history of highly educated families of Baghdad by Mohammed Said Al-Rawi), Dar Al-Shu'on At-Taqaifiyya Al-A'ammah, A'adamiyyah, Baghdad.
- (ed.) 2004, *Al-Iqd Al-Lame' bi athar Baghdad wal masajed wal Jawame'* by Abdul-hameed Abadah (The glowing necklace of the heritage of Baghdad mosques and its mosques), Anwar Dijla Publishing, Baghdad.

References

- Rapoport, A 1977, *Human aspects of urban form: towards a man-environment approach to urban form and design*, 1st edn, Urban and Regional Planning series; vol 15, Pergamon Press, Oxford.
- Raymond, A 2002, *Arab cities in the Ottoman period: Cairo, Syria, and the Maghreb*, Ashgate, Variorum, Aldershot, Hampshire, Great Britain; Burlington, Vt.
- Rich, CJ 1836, *Narrative of a residence in Koordistan, and on the site of ancient Nineveh: with journal of a voyage down the Tigris to Bagdad and an account of a visit to Shirauz and Persepolis*, 2 vols, J. Duncan, London.
- Richards, DS & University of Pennsylvania Near East Center 1973, *Islamic civilisation, 950 -1150: a colloquium published under the auspices of the Near Eastern History Group*, the Near East Center, University of Pennsylvania, Cassirer; distributed by Faber, Oxford, London.
- Riley, CA, Schuster, JMD, De Monchaux, J & Salzburg Seminar 1997, *Preserving the built heritage: tools for implementation*, University Press of New England; Salzburg Seminar, Hanover, NH.
- Said, EW 1979, *Orientalism*, 25th anniversary edn, Vintage Books, New York.
- 1983, *The world, the text, and the critic*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass.
- 1985, *Beginnings: intention and method*, Columbia University Press, New York.
- 2004, *From Oslo to Iraq and the road map*, Bloomsbury, London.
- 2007, *On late style: music and literature against the grain*, 1st Vintage Books edn, Vintage Books, New York.
- Said, EW & English Institute 1980, *Literature and society: selected papers from the English Institute, 1978*, Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore.
- Said, EW, Suleiman, F & Association of Arab-American University Graduates 1973, *The Arabs today: alternatives for tomorrow*, Forum Associates, Columbus, Ohio.
- Said, EW & Viswanathan, G 2004, *Power, politics and culture: interviews with Edward W. Said*, Bloomsbury, London.
- Sallis, J 1996, *Being and logos: reading the Platonic dialogues*, 3rd edn, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, India, Britain.
- Schinnkel, A 2004, 'History and historiography in process', in *History and Theory*, vol. 43, pp. 39-56.
- Scoville, S 1977, 'Beschreibung von Arabian by Carsten Niebuhr (book review)', *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, vol. 8, no. 2, pp. pp. 275-276.
- Selman, A 2012, 'Al-Kadhemiyya fi a'maq Al-Tarekh' (Kadhemiyya city in history), Buratha News Agency, viewed 6 June 2013, <http://www.burathanews.com/news_article_174457.html>.
- Selman, I, Abdul-Khaleq, H, Al-Izzi, N, Yunus, N 1982, *Al-Imarat Al-Arabiyya Al-Islamiyya fi Al-Iraq* (Arabic and Islamic architecture in Iraq), vols. 1, 2 Al-Hurriyya Press, Baghdad.
- Shaffer, ES & Holderlin, F 1975, *Kubla Khan and the fall of Jerusalem: the mythological school in biblical criticism and secular literature, 1770-1880*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge; New York.
- Shamsuddin, MJ (ed.) 1989, *Al-Sunan Al-Tarekhiyya fil Qur'an by Mohammed Baqer Al-Sadr* (Islamic laws in the Qur'an by Mohammed Baqer Al-Sadr), Dar Al-Ta'aruf lil matbo'aat, Beirut.
- Shamsuddin, MM 1972, *Harakat Al-Tarekh inda Al-Imam Ali* (Imam Ali's view on the movement of history), viewed 23 July 2013 <<http://www.alseraj.net/maktaba/kotob/mtanwe/tarekhwharakat/maktaba/motafariqa/tattareekh/a1.htm>>.

- Shubbar, J 2001, *Adab Al-Taff* (The literature of Al-Taff), Mu'assasat Al-Tarekh, Beirut, viewed 2 June 2013, <<http://m-alhassanain.com/kotob%20hossain/adab%20hosaini/adab%20altaf/index.htm>>.
- Shukur, Sh (ed.) 1980, *Dewan Al-Uzari Al-Kabeer* (The poem collection of A-Uzari), Dar Al-Tawjeeh Al-Islami, Beirut.
- Sinclair, W F 1967, *The travels of Pedro Teixeira, with his "Kings of Harmuz" and extracts from his "Kings of Persia"*, trans, with further notes and an introduction by Donald Ferguson, Hakluyt Society, Kraus Reprint, Nendeln, Liechtenstein.
- Sluglett, P 2008, *The urban social history of the Middle East, 1750-1950*, 1st edn, Syracuse University Press, Syracuse, N.Y.
- Smith, M 1977, *An early mystic of Baghdad: a study of the life and teaching of Harith b. Asad Al-Muhasibi, A.D. 781-A.D. 857*, AMS Press, New York.
- Smith, ND, Allhoff, F & Vaidya, A (eds.) 2008, *Ancient philosophy: essential readings with commentary*, Blackwell readings in the history of philosophy, Blackwell Pub., Malden, MA.
- Snodgrass A & Coyne R, 'Is designing hermeneutical?', *Architectural Theory Review*, vol. 2, Is. 1, 1996
- Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge (Great Britain) 1833, *Lives of eminent persons*, Baldwin and Cradock, London.
- Soder, H 2003, 'The return of cultural history; literary historiography from Nietzsche to Hayden White', *History of European ideas*, vol. 29, no. 1, pp. 73-84.
- Stark, F 1947, *Baghdad sketches*, published for Guild by J. Murray, London.
- Stiegler, B & Barker, S 2009, *Techniques and time; disorientation*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, Calif.
- Stone, PG, Farchakh, J & Fisk, R (eds.) 2008, *The destruction of cultural heritage in Iraq*, The heritage matters series, v. 1, Boydell Press, Woodbridge, Suffolk.
- Swift, M 2006, *Mapping the world*, Chartwell, New Jersey.
- Tavernier, J-B, Crooke, W & Ball, V 1977, *Travels in India*, 2nd edn, 2 vols, Oriental Books Reprint Corporation, New Delhi.
- Taylor, D (ed.) 2011, *Michel Foucault: key concepts*, Acumen, Durham.
- Teymur, N & Awotona, AA 1999, *Tradition, location and community: place-making and development*, Ashgate, Aldershot, Hants, England
- Tripp, C 2007, *A history of Iraq*, 3rd edn, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Tschumi, B 1999, *Architecture and disjunction*, 1st edn, MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass.
- Tzonis, A & Lefaivre, L 1986, *Classical architecture: the poetics of order*, MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass.
- Veinstein, G 2008, 'The Ottoman town; fifteenth-eighteenth centuries', in Jayyusi, SK, Holod, R, Petruccioli, A & Raymond, A (eds.), *The city in the Islamic world*, Brill, Leiden, Boston, pp.207-212.
- Vernoit, SJ 2007-2012, 'Niebuhr, Carsten', in *Oxford Art Online*, Oxford University Press, viewed 4 May 2013, <<http://www.oxfordartonline.com:80/subscriber/article/grove/art/T062405>>.
- Walker, L 1986, 'History and criticism by Dominick Lacapra', *The American Historical Review*, vol. 91, no. 2, pp. 359-360.

References

- Walton, P & Mossop, E 2001, *City spaces: art & design*, Craftsman House, Sydney, N.S.W.
- Warren, J & Fethi, I 1982, *Traditional houses in Baghdad*, Coach Publishing House, Horsham, England.
- Wellsted, JR & Ormsby 1968, *Travels to the city of the Caliphs, along the shores of the Persian Gulf and the Mediterranean: including a voyage to the coast of Arabia, and a tour on the Island of Socotra*, 2 vols, Gregg International, Farnborough, Hants.
- Wikantari, RR 1994, 'Safeguarding a living heritage', MArch thesis, University of Tasmania.
- Wolf, ER 1982, *Europe and the people without history*, University of California Press, Berkeley.
- Woods, L 1992, *Anarchitecture; architecture is a political act*, Academy Editions, St. Martin's Press, London, New York.
- Zevi, B 1974, *Architecture as space: how to look at architecture*, Horizon Press, New York.